

WEST NEW YORK
NEW JERSEY

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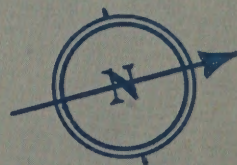
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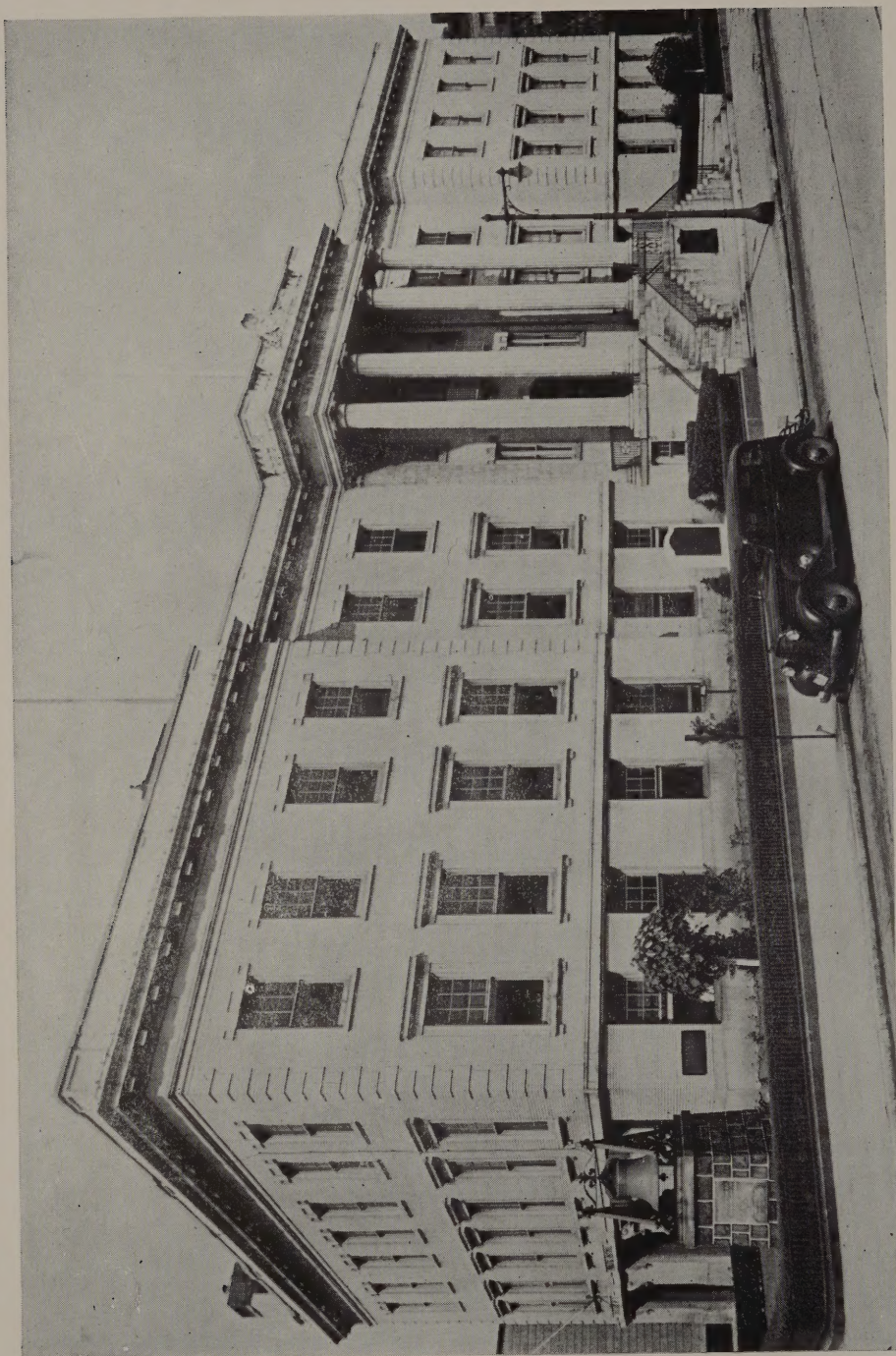
FROM TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF HUDSON COUNTY

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Municipal Building

HISTORY OF WEST NEW YORK NEW JERSEY

*In Commemoration of Its
Golden Jubilee*

Walter T. Eickmann

by

WALTER T. EICKMANN, Ph.D.

Published under the Auspices of
THE GOLDEN JUBILEE COMMITTEE
WEST NEW YORK, N. J.

1948

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Foreword

Ever since the "Half Moon" weighed anchor before them, the Palisades of the Hudson have been a source of admiration to the civilized world. From their summit, particularly at sunset, one beholds a gorgeous view of the skyline of Manhattan and its busy waterway. Reflected in the myriads of windows of the world's tallest buildings, the setting sun is harmonized in a symmetric pattern of gleaming gold. As the shadows deepen and the lofty ridge is viewed from the east bank of the river, it stands grim and stately like the ramparts of a mighty fortress.

On the heights of the ridge are the towns and townships of North Hudson, the great-grandchildren of the mother township of North Bergen, originally known as Bergen Woods. West New York, from a legislative viewpoint the youngest of these thriving municipalities, is celebrating the golden anniversary of its incorporation. To commemorate this event I have written this book. It is the outcome of a delightfully fascinating diversion.

Although by no means exhaustive, the material is reliable and authentic. Legendary items of interest have been treated as such. It has been my aim to present a picture of "those good old days" which will be of interest to the general reader. For this reason, footnotes have been omitted in the text and placed, together with critical comments, in the back of the book. Small superior numbers in the text refer to them, chapter by chapter, for those interested in additional research.

I wish gratefully to acknowledge the faithful co-operation of the Golden Jubilee Historical Committee: Miss Mary Bickhard and Mrs. Matilda Brill Connell, for their assistance in collecting important data, Mr. Kenneth D. Hart and Mr. Jay B. Phelps for their invaluable criticism of the manuscript. I wish to thank my sister Ruth Eickmann for her assistance in

tabulating newspaper data and General Chairman Joseph Stilz and the Honorary Chairmen of the West New York Golden Jubilee who have made the publication of this book possible.

To Mr. Fabian Zacccone and Mr. Edward H. Frenzke I wish to express my thanks for their artistic contributions and to Mr. Henry W. Fink for preparing the illustrations for publication. I am most grateful to my wife Mildred Eickmann, who has prepared the manuscript for publication and contributed a charming poem for one of the chapters. Her constant inspiration and encouragement have been of immeasurable value.

W. T. E.

West New York, New Jersey.
August, 1948.

Contents

	PAGE
FOREWORD	v
“WHEN LIBERTY’S FORM STANDS IN VIEW”	1
“HALF MOON’S” HAVEN	2
HAUNT OF THE RED MAN	4
BERGEN LINE	6
BERGEN WOODS	7
“MAD ANTHONY” AND THE POET-SPY	9
BULLSFERRY ROAD	16
TORY AND PATRIOT	19
“THREE PIGEONS” ON THE ‘PIKE	21
AN AFFAIR OF HONOR	26
“FULTON’S FOLLY”	29
“A-HUNTING WE MUST GO”	31
OLD WEEHAWKEN FERRY	35
“THY WOODS AND TEMPLED HILLS”	41
OAK CLIFF	46
RIVALRY ALONG THE RIVER	49
LITTLE OLD WEST NEW YORK	54
WEEHAWKEN VILLAGE	59

	PAGE
TOWER HILL	61
UPPER DALLYTOWN	65
HUDSON COUNTY PARK	67
DALLYTOWN TALLYHO	68
ELDORADO	73
"THEY'RE OFF AT THE 'GUT'!"	79
EARLY GOVERNMENT	85
TURF FIRE AND CYCLONE	88
TAURUS POST OFFICE	90
FROM UNION TO UNITY	93
CHARTER DAY	95
PARADE OF PROGRESS	103
"DEAR OLD GOLDEN RULE DAYS"	110
"BUILD THEE MORE STATELY MANSIONS, O MY SOUL!"	117
FIRE FIGHTERS AND BLUE COATS	125
THE WEST NEW YORK GOLDEN JUBILEE	132
NOTES AND COMMENTS	134
GOLDEN JUBILEE COMMITTEE	153
APPENDIX	156
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	163
BIBLIOGRAPHY	164

Illustrations

	PAGE
<i>Municipal Building</i>	FRONTISPIECE
<i>The "Half Moon"</i>	2
EDWARD H. FRENZKE	
<i>The Purchase of North Hudson</i>	4
North Bergen Post Office Mural by AVERY JOHNSON	
<i>Bergenline Avenue in 1913</i>	6
<i>Bull's Ferry from Weehawk Wharf in 1866</i>	7
Sketch by BENSON J. LOSSING	
<i>"Mad Anthony" Wayne</i>	9
Engraved by FOREST from the Portrait by JOHN TRUMBULL	
<i>Major John André</i>	10
Engraved by HOPWOOD from a Drawing by André	
<i>The Capture of André</i>	13
From the Painting of ASHER B. DURAND	
<i>Block House Door</i>	14
Courtesy Washington Headquarters Museum at Newburgh	
<i>Block House Point in 1880</i>	15
A. HOSIER	
<i>Park Avenue from Monitor Park in 1913</i>	16
<i>Looking West from Park Avenue about 1914</i>	17
<i>"Three Pigeons" Hotel</i>	22
Sketch by FABIAN ZACCONE from an Old Painting	
<i>"Light Horse Harry" Lee</i>	23
From the Painting by ALONZO CHAPPEL	
<i>Old Dueling Ground about 1810</i>	26
From an Old Print	
<i>Hamilton Monument</i>	27
<i>Fulton's "Clermont"</i>	29
From a lithograph attributed to CHARLES PENSEE	
Courtesy New York Public Library	

	PAGE
<i>Thomas Jefferson Dobbs</i>	32
<i>Old Weehawken Ferry—the “Midland” and “Oswego”</i>	34
Courtesy Hoboken Public Library	
<i>Old Team Boat</i>	36
From an Old Print	
<i>Old Gate House</i>	38
<i>One of the Many Small Parks on the Edge of the Palisades</i>	39
<i>“New York from the Heights of Jersey”</i>	40
ANDREW MELROSE, Courtesy New York Public Library	
<i>Weehawken Ferry about 1875</i>	43
Sketch by ANDREW MELROSE	
<i>“A Short Cut”</i>	44
Sketch by ANDREW MELROSE	
<i>Dudley S. Gregory</i>	46
Courtesy Jersey City Museum	
<i>West Shore Terminal in 1891</i>	50
Courtesy Hoboken Public Library	
<i>Conrad Bickhard</i>	55
<i>Pierce Avenue looking West</i>	56
<i>Old Town Hall</i>	58
<i>Tower Hill in 1913</i>	62
<i>Andrew Melrose</i>	63
Courtesy New York Public Library	
<i>Melrose Studio</i>	64
<i>“Schmidt’s Pond”</i>	65
<i>First Bergenline Trolley—Hudson County Number One</i>	69
HOWARD E. JOHNSTON Collection	
<i>Eldorado Viaduct</i>	71
<i>Eldorado on the Palisades</i>	72
Courtesy Hoboken Public Library	
<i>Eldorado Amphitheatre</i>	74
<i>Eldorado Casino and Fountain</i>	76
Courtesy Hoboken Public Library	

	PAGE
Old White Brewery in 1862	78
Entrance to the Guttenberg track in 1892	80
Nungesser's Hotel	82
"Little Coney Island"	83
William H. Schmidt	84
Old Town Hall	86
John E. Otis	92
"Window Washer"	96
Tillie Brill	98
"American Guard" Band	101
Bergenline Avenue Looking North in 1914	104
Memorial High School	107
Bullsferry Road School	110
(West New York Sign in Background)	
Public School Number One (1866)	111
Public School Number One (1891)	112
Carlos A. Woodworth	114
Old Churches	118
Vignette by HENRY W. FINK	
Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two	126
Hickory Engine Company Number One	128
Golden Jubilee Emblem	132
MRS. ANNE FINK	
Old Bell Tower	145
Original Hamilton Memorial Tablet	157
From an Artotype by ALBERT BIERSTADT	
Golden Jubilee Cachet	162
KARL LIND	
Map of North Bergen (1854)	End Papers
ROBERT C. BACOT	
(Boundaries of modern West New York superimposed in heavy blue lines)	

“When Liberty’s Form Stands in View”

*Rise, stately symbol! Holding forth
Thy light and hope to all who sit
In chains and darkness! Belt the earth
With watch-fires from thy torch uplift.*

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

“**I** NOW CHRISTEN you the Town of West New York. . . . All hail to the new town of West New York! May the great King of Nations ever keep her on the starry banner of the free! Gentlemen, I now commit her to your care.”

With this stirring peroration Tillie Brill, garbed in the costume of the Goddess of Liberty, climaxed the formal incorporation festivities at West New York fifty years ago, while Master of Ceremonies Supervising Principal William Van Sickle, clad in the traditional togs of Uncle Sam, smiled approvingly. Four fly-bitten, white horses snorted and stamped their hoofs impatiently on the freshly sprinkled road in front of the old Town Hall as if anxious to assume their place of distinction in the parade. It was to be their privilege to draw the colorful float bearing the Goddess, Uncle Sam, and thirteen beautiful maidens, representing the original states of the Union.

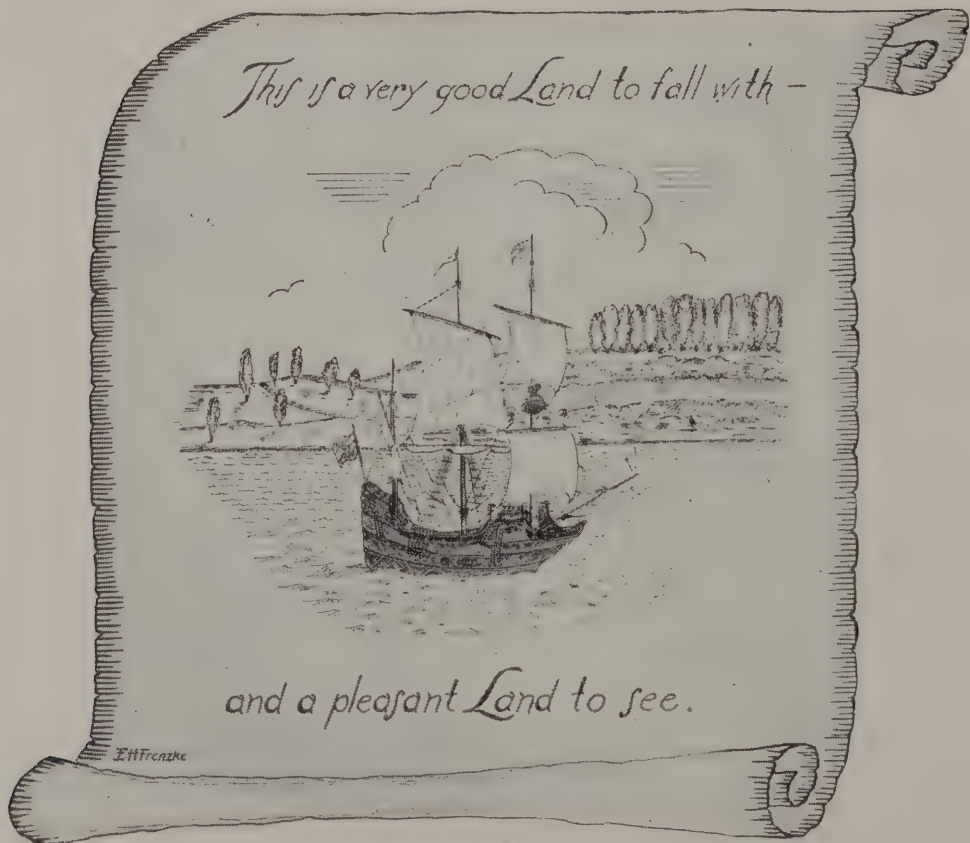
It was, indeed, a historic moment in the annals of the infant town, but in order to appreciate the full significance of the occasion it is necessary to turn even farther back in the pages of history. The ceremonies proclaimed a legalized fact, but the infant, it will be seen, was already quite a young lady.

“Half Moon’s” Haven

“When drinking in the scene, my mind goes back upon the tide of years and lo, a vision! In its upward path the ‘Half Moon’ glides.”

—ALFRED B. STREET

THE RUGGED Palisades which Henry Hudson saw when he anchored the “Half Moon” at Weehawken Cove on a fine October morning in 1609



appeared in their pristine grandeur. The lordly Hudson, then called “Mahican-ittuck”¹ “the ever-flowing waters”, flowed majestically along their base towards the sea. “This is a very good land to fall with and a

pleasant land to see," Robert Juet², an officer of the "Half Moon," entered into the ship's log . . . "and hard by it is a cliff that looked of the colour of white greene, as though it were either a copper or silver myne."

The entire summit and foothills were a vast wilderness of stately white oak, hickory, walnut, and chestnut with thick underbrush through which roamed countless bears, deer, elk, wolves, foxes, and squirrels supplying the Ackinkes-hacky (Hackensack) and Tappaen Indians with food and clothing. Almost three hundred years later in the Elegant Eighties of the last century, an old Union Township resident³ reported: "The region was a wilderness when I was a boy. The hogs ran wild in those days; the common way in the autumn was to hunt them with dogs. My father-in-law one fall killed five handsome hogs; they never had a mouthful except what they got out of the woods. So dense was the forest that I often got lost when going out gunning. The cows had bells, or you never could have found them."

Haunt of the Red Man

*In legend and in name they live,
By lake and stream and mountain wild;
Seldom a thought to them we'd give,
Were these reminders but despoiled.
Their forms have faded from the land,
Their songs unheard upon the shore,
They sleep in death on every hand,
Their war-whoops wild are heard no more.*

—JARED BARHITE

THE INDIANS inhabiting this region were a constant threat to the safety and security of the hard, blond Dutch traders who settled at Pavonia and Communipaw to the south. Acts of violence and treachery were the



The Purchase of North Hudson

order of the day, especially while Willem Kieft was Director-General of New Netherlands. Goaded on by his crafty and deceitful secretary,

Cornelis Van Tienhoven, Kieft provoked many bloody incidents. He had little knowledge of Indian character and used high-handed methods of exacting tribute, in the form of maize, furs, and wampum from the carefree sons of the forest. Since the natives as born freemen had known no form of subjection, two bloody Indian wars were the outcome of this policy. After the peace treaty, sagacious "Old Silver Peg" Petrus Stuyvesant, successor to the tyrannical Kieft, purchased the high plateau on January 30, 1658, "for eighty fathom of wampum, twenty fathom of cloth, twelve kettles, six guns, two blankets, one double kettle, and one half barrel of strong beer."¹ For these "good and valuable considerations" the happy hunting grounds of Chiefs Orataney of the Hackensacks and Sessekenick of the Tappans passed on to the hated Swannekins.²

Bergen Line

IN THE YEAR 1661, the Indian lands of the present West New York and vicinity were conveyed to their first white owners through patents¹ issued by Governor Stuyvesant to the various freeholders of Bergen. Among these were the Van Vorsts, the Van Horns, the De Motts, the Garra-brants, the Newkirks, and other well-known families of Bergen Town.



Bergenline Avenue Looking South in 1913

When New Amsterdam came under English rule, the patentees swore allegiance to King Charles the Second. Later, Governor Cartaret of East Jersey confirmed the Dutch patents, and the property was carefully surveyed into various grants. The entire region lying between the Hudson River and what is now Bergenline Avenue was designated as Slonga, “pitching off place”.

The original purpose of parcelling out these patents into “Slonga” lots was to give each landholder certain riparian rights to raft or float, whatever timber he chose to cut, down to his homestead in Bergen or over to New Amsterdam. The western boundary of Slonga², the Bergen Line, was a surveyor’s mark designated by modern title searchers as the “A” line. About two centuries later (ca. 1865) it gave the name and location to Bergenline Avenue, the most important business street of West New York.

Bergen Woods

*The Palisades in sterner pride
Tower as the gloom steals o'er the tide,
For the great stream a bulwark meet
That laves its rock-encumbered feet.*

—ROBERT C. SANDS



Bull's Ferry from Weehawk Wharf in 1866

DURING THE Revolution and continuing until 1840, all of the present Hudson County was called Bergen after the old Dutch settlement (now Jersey City). The Indians liked to refer to the elevated land as “Wee-auken,” meaning in their picturesque language “rocks that look like trees.” The less imaginative and practical-minded Dutch, however, named it Bergen

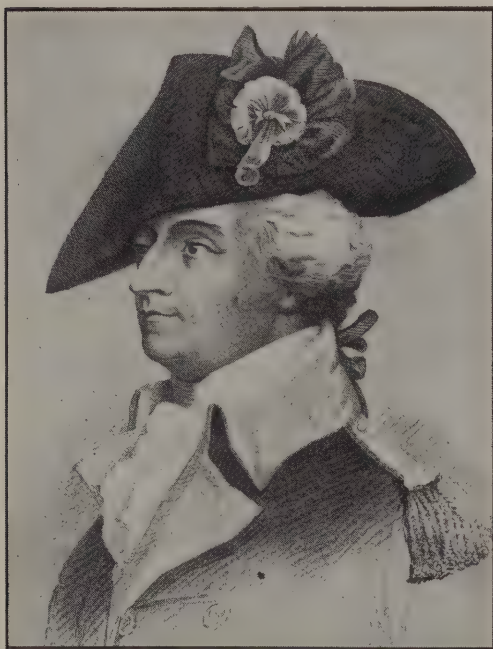
“hills”, not as some authorities¹ believe after Bergen-op-Zoom in Holland, but because such towering cliffs were unknown in their native country. The territory which extended northward from the present Hackensack Plank Road and included the southern part of what is now Bergen County as far north as Fort Lee, was known as Bergen Woods² until 1843. In this year the Township of North Bergen³, which about ten years later was to include the budding settlement of West New York, was set off by legislative act from Bergen Town.

“Mad Anthony” and the Poet-Spy

*The star spangled banner, the flag of the brave
And the cross of old England in amity wave,
But if ever the nations do battle again,
God send us such soldiers as Anthony Wayne.*

—MINNA IRVING

BERGEN WOODS played a significant part in the Revolutionary history of our country. It was the battleground between Tory and Patriot and, like the Neutral Ground of Westchester, was the scene of many inter-



“Mad Anthony” Wayne

esting events. Although it cannot with any degree of certainty be ascertained that “Washington slept here,” documentary evidence indicates that from the elevation of the Palisades the Commander-in-Chief kept an ever-watchful eye on the British occupants of New York.

General Henry Clinton, Howe’s successor in New York, counted heavily upon the New Jersey Loyalists to supply his stronghold in New York with food and fuel during the winter of 1779-1780. Since firewood was very scarce, a ceiling price of four pounds sterling per cord was established by Clinton. The

winter was severe and the Hudson froze over its entire width. The high price of fuel in New York and the abundance of firewood at the top of the Palisades proved a great temptation to the Tories on the Jersey side,

To make the enterprise of supplying the shivering British in New York a safe risk, the Tories erected a blockhouse¹ on an elevation in the beautiful glen which at one time separated Guttenberg from North Bergen. This fort stood at the bottom of the now filled-in portion of Boulevard East, north of the Guttenberg Veterans' housing project. It was to be their refuge in case of a daylight attack by the Continentals and a sleeping place at night. Here, seventy woodcutters and refugees assembled under the leadership of Captain Tom Ward, Commandant during the absence of Colonel Cuyler.

To Washington, then stationed at the Dey Mansion² in Preakness, this little stronghold was such a source of irritation that he dispatched "Mad Anthony" Wayne of Stony Point fame to destroy it and at the same time to drive off a number of cattle on Bergen Neck³ (now Bayonne). Although in civilian life Wayne had been a drover by trade, he delegated

"Light Horse Harry" Lee,⁴ the hero of Paulus Hook, to round up the cattle with his cavalry. Wayne, accompanied by General Irvine and Colonel Hampton in command of the First and Second Pennsylvania regiments and four pieces of Proctor's artillery, boldly set forth on the expedition against the blockhouse.



Major John André

On July 21, 1780, the attack began. A cannonade lasting for about an hour proved ineffective, since the Tory stronghold was strategically protected on two sides by the perpendicular rocks of the cliff, and, like a medieval fortress, was fortified by stockades with a ditch and parapet. One regiment advanced to the stock-

ade under a hail of withering fire. The attackers, however, were compelled to withdraw just at the critical moment when the Tories were alleged to have had only one round of ammunition left. The signal for retreat was given because it was believed that enemy reinforcements were approaching from the river. "Light Horse Harry" was successful in his undertaking, but "Mad Anthony" suffered great humiliation because his daring enterprise ended in a fiasco. The gallant defenders received special commendation from George the Third⁵, and Washington⁶ was obliged to defend Wayne's conduct in a letter to the Continental Congress.

The whole affair might have been forgotten, had it not been for the poetic effusions of a certain Major John André and a strange poetic justice which proved to be the outcome of it all.

André conceived the bright idea of glorifying the woodcutters' triumph at the blockhouse in a lengthy mock-heroic ballad entitled, "The Cow Chace,"⁷ in which he scathingly satirized Wayne in the following manner:

"And Wayne descending Steers shall know,
And tauntingly deride,
And call to mind in ev'ry Low,
The tanning of his hide."

Concerning Tory casualties he admitted:

"Five refugees ('tis true) were found
Stiff on the block-house floor,
But then 'tis thought the shot went round
And in at the back door."

But the most significant and ominous part of the whole poem was its concluding stanza:

"And now I've closed my epic strain,
I tremble as I show it,
Lest this same warrio-drover Wayne
Should ever catch the poet."

No, Mad Anthony did not catch the poet. Fate was to leave that task to other hands. Exactly two months to the day after the blockhouse encounter, on September 21, 1780, at the home of Joshua Smith in Haverstraw, André kept a secret nocturnal rendezvous with Benedict Arnold, erstwhile hero of Saratoga and trusted friend of Washington. Here, in what is known today as the Treason House, plans were completed for the betrayal of West Point to the British forces. After the conference, André, under the assumed name of John Anderson and disguised in a wide cloak, crossed the Hudson over King's Ferry to Verplank's Point where Von Steuben had drilled the ragged Continentals near the site of the present Indian Point Park of the Hudson River Day Line. Thence, he proceeded southward along the eastern bank through the Neutral Ground, habitat of the Skinners and Cowboys of Westchester. On his person he carried a pass signed by Arnold.

At Tarrytown, on September 23, by strange coincidence the very day the concluding part of "The Cow Chace" was published in *Rivington's Gazette*, André was stopped by the American pickets John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams. Upon searching him, they found concealed in his boots the incriminating papers which revealed the treasonable enterprise. One week later he was brought across the Hudson to the old Dutch church in Tappan for trial before a Board of Enquiry, convened by Washington, presided over by Major General Greene, and attended by Lafayette and Von Steuben. This body found him guilty of espionage and recommended the death penalty. Within a mile, in open view of Washington's headquarters⁸, he was hanged.

There was poetic justice in the fact that the commander of the district troops which escorted him to the gallows was none other than Brigadier General Anthony Wayne⁹.

A final ironic touch to the blockhouse episode is found in a stanza, written by another hand on a manuscript copy of André's poem beneath his signature:

“When the epic strain was sung
The poet by the neck was hung,
And to his cost he finds too late
The ‘dung born tribes’ decide his fate.”



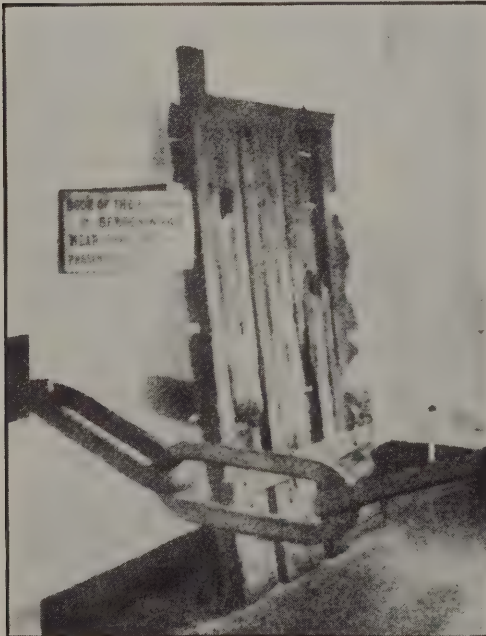
The Capture of André

This sentiment, however, was not shared by those who witnessed his execution. There was a mingling of pity and sympathy when André, who had expected to die like a soldier¹⁰ facing a firing squad, said, “All I request of you, gentlemen, is that you will bear witness to the world that I die like a brave man. It will be but a momentary pang.”¹¹

In the summer of 1821, when the poet-spy's remains were removed from Tappan by James Buchanan, British Consul at New York, under instructions from the Duke of York and finally entombed in Westminster Abbey near his monument, a Westchester newspaper ¹² of that generation printed a poem about André which concluded:

"Peace to thy shade, ill-fated one!
Though in the abbey's lengthened aisle,
Scarce lit by the day's meridian sun,
Thy marble bust may sadly smile,
Yet is there darkness on thy name,
Though gentle pity mourns for thee,
While patriots bless the holy flame,
Which kept thy captors' spirit free."

The foundation stones of the old blockhouse were still to be seen in the mid 1920's before the ravine in the big bend of the Boulevard was filled in. The writer recalls having seen them when as a lad, together with other venturesome companions, he used to climb along the eroded walls of the Palisades in quest of "catgold" (iron pyrites). These "prospecting" ventures frequently followed an invigorating swim at the battered hulk of the old "Lizzie Washburn" in her final port near Clayton's boat house, the site of old Block House Point.



Block House Door

The door of the old fortress was salvaged by Judge Suffern towards the close of the last century. In its original battered condition it is preserved for posterity in the museum near the Hasbrouck House, Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh. Before it are a few links from the old chain, forged by the ironmasters at Ringwood Manor, with which the Americans had hoped to close the Hudson to the approach of the British boats below West Point.

The illustration of old Block House Point, sketched by A. Hosier for the Magazine of American History in 1880, shows the "Castle Hill" observatory of the

John Meeks estate on the promontory above. By 1851 Meeks had acquired through nineteen different titles¹³ the site of the present Woodcliff section of North Bergen. His son, Hamilton V. Meeks, in later years Vice-President of the Hudson Trust Company, together with his father-in-law Robert E. Gardner, established, in 1874, the Gardner and Meeks lumber yard at the base of the cliff. It was through his and Herman Walker's efforts as directors of the Land and Improvement Company that Woodcliff sprang up within less than a decade. The firm Gardner and Meeks was still functioning in the early 1920's.



Block House Point, Hudson River

Bullserry Road

BERGEN WOODS had comparatively few roads in those by-gone days. Bullserry Road, a rough, winding, mountain highway, known by that name until it officially became Park Avenue in 1909 through a movement initiated by Louis Emmerich and Peter Mink, was the main link between Hoebuck¹ and Bull's Ferry. In the densely wooded vicinity² of this road in the swampland between Guttenberg and Union Hill "Light Horse Harry" Lee is said to have been lost for a period of three hours while on his way to the daring enterprise against Paulus Hook (Jersey City). By some strange circumstance, however, Lee avoided a bloody encounter in



Park Avenue from Monitor Park in 1913

the darkness with the Tory forces of Colonel Van Bushkirk, who had set out from Paulus Hook to raid the English Neighborhood near Ridgefield. The northern portion of this old thoroughfare still runs down the Palisades near Hudson County Park, winding sharply along the cliff behind the present Wagon Wheel Restaurant as it did in those primitive days of travel.

Bullserry Road was the principal route through the territory of old Union Township (now West New York) and Guttenberg, long before Bergenline Avenue became a thoroughfare. At the foot of the hill just below Shady Side, Bull's Ferry, the northern terminus of the road near Lever Brothers' plant, was the pre-Revolutionary crossing to New York. In Revolutionary days the ferry was operated by George and Absalom Bull, who both fought on the Tory side in the blockhouse skirmish. Through a Crown grant, the land was originally the property of William Bayard, also a Tory, and was confiscated³ and sold by Cornelius Haring, agent for Forfeited Estates, on August 25, 1784, to Cornelius Huyler, whose sons Abraham and Peter established Huyler's Tavern on the cliff above. John Randall, Junior's *Map of the City of New York and Surrounding Country*, drawn in 1821 and now prominently displayed in the hall of the New York Public Library, clearly locates the ferry, the tavern, and the old highway, as also the homesteads of George Suckley, Betull (Abraham Bartholf), Jacob Brower (Brower's Point), Eldridge and Ludlow, the earliest residents on the Guttenberg and West New York waterfronts.



Looking West from Park Avenue about 1914

In the columns of the *Hudson County Democrat-Advertiser* on May 15, 1886, there appeared under the heading, "An Old Relic," the account of a sensational discovery. When laborers excavated for the foundation of a new house for farmer Fred Schlosser on the Dallytown Road (now Hudson Boulevard), they found an obstruction which they at first believed to be a very large rock. A heavy thud with a crowbar, however, produced a metallic sound, and, after a great effort on their part, an old howitzer cannon covered with rust was unearthed and taken to Schlosser's house. At that time it was believed, according to the account, that the Tory, Absalom Bull, who had sheltered British soldiers in his small but comfortable stone house in a section of Bergen Woods known as Black Hill, abandoned his house and buried the cannon before he fled to New York.

Tory and Patriot

*They will not stir when the drifts are gone,
Or ice melts out of the bay:
And the men that served with Washington
Lie all as still as they.*

—RUDYARD KIPLING

A WEIRD AND gory tale¹ mingled with absurdity centers around an old homestead on the old Lake tract of North Guttenberg. According to this story, one bitter cold night all the members of the family had retired under warm blankets in the old, stone farm house. Only the good *hausfrau* lingered in the kitchen preparing the earthen jars of milk for churning on the following morning. Suddenly a roving band of English scouts from New York, attracted by the warm light shining from the window, burst into the room intent upon warming themselves by the glowing hearth. They sat down to drink freely from their flasks at the comfortable fire.

Meanwhile, a band of American scouts southward bound, spotting horses tied up outside, advanced towards the kitchen window with cocked muskets. Seeing the redcoats, they opened fire and killed them all. In falling, the British scouts upset the housewife's jars on the floor, where the milk mingled with their blood. Immediately the Americans entered, dragged out the corpses, and buried them in the deep snow outside. After they had drawn water from the well, they washed the floor with brooms provided by the farmer's wife. Having completed their house-cleaning, they brought in firewood and made themselves comfortable till dawn. When they left on the following morning, they compensated their bewildered hostess for her losses, each donating his share to the cause.

*The New Jersey Gazette*² of April 28, 1779, carried the following story of a Revolutionary occurrence within the present territory of West New York:

“On Saturday (April 17, 1779), two of the Bergen County Militia, who with others had been out reconnoitering, suspecting from the conduct of a boy they saw running in great haste towards a house on the bank of the Hudson River, about a mile above Weehawk, that some of the infamous gang of robbers that have for some time infested this and neighboring parts of the State of New York, were concealed there, advanced as far as possible to the house; one of them entered immediately and discovered five or six in the house, several of whom had arms, and with admirable presence of mind calling aloud to his companion as if a large party had accompanied him, discharged his musket and killed the chief of the gang on the spot. Retiring to load his piece, the rest of the villains took to their heels.”

“Three Pigeons” on the ‘Pike

*Then come put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever;
Our hearts and our liquors are stout
Here’s the Three Jolly Pigeons forever!
Let some cry up woodcock and hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons,
But of all the birds in the air
Here’s health to the Three Jolly Pigeons!
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!*

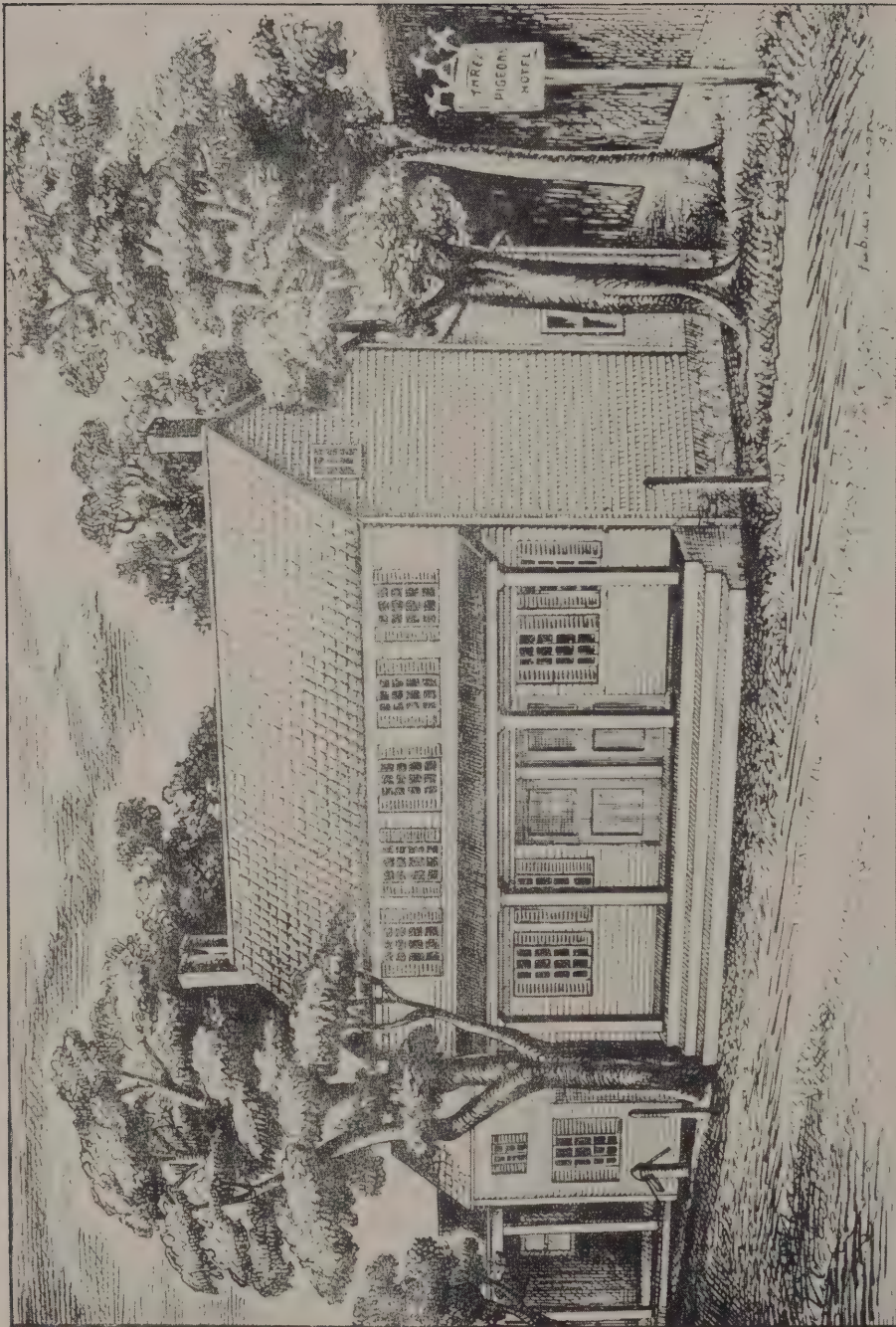
—OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THIS MERRY drinking song of Tony Lumpkin in Oliver Goldsmith’s popular comedy, “She Stoops to Conquer,” created an atmosphere of conviviality in a rural tavern of Merrie Olde England in the period before the American Revolution. But here in North Hudson also, towards the end of the eighteenth century there was an inn, the “Three Pigeons,” which for over a century stood as a well-known landmark on the old Hackensack Turnpike at the southern fringe of Bergen Woods in Maisland, now the New Durham section of North Bergen. Whether this important hostelry, which once occupied a prominent site near the junction of the Hackensack Plank Road and Tonnele Avenue, received its name from Goldsmith’s rollicking drama is difficult to establish, but the old stop-over played an important role in two of the local maneuvers during the Revolution.

On February 2, 1778, four years after Goldsmith’s death, the *New Jersey Gazette*¹ refers to this old hotel in the following dispatch:

“On Thursday afternoon Captain John Richards, of New Barbadoes Neck, on his way to see some member of his family who was sick of the smallpox, was captured on the road between ‘Three Pigeons’ and Bergen by two professed patriots and was shot dead by one (Brouwer) as he was preventing the other (Lozier) robbing him of his watch.”

*Rivington’s Gazette*² of March 17, 1779, tells of an unsuccessful



"Three Pigeons"

attempt on the part of the deserter Col. Abraham Van Bushkirk and Lieutenant Haslop in command of Tory forces to capture an unnamed "rebel" Captain and a Lieutenant with a party of Carolina troops at the "Three Pigeons."

These dispatches, which appeared in Tory newspapers, seem to indicate that the old inn was a favorite rendezvous for American officers. More specific reference is made in the diary of Captain McLane,³ aide-de-camp of Major "Light Horse Harry" Lee in the brilliant enterprise against Paulus Hook on August 18, 1779, for which Lee received a gold Congressional Medal of Honor. Since McLane's eyewitness account⁴ is but brief, it may be quoted in full.



"Light Horse Harry" Lee

"Wednesday 18, August this morning received orders from Mj'r Lee to take post in the woods, near Bargain in order to intercept the communication between Powls hook and the country and to Join him at a certain place in the woods near Three Pidgeons in order to conduct him to attack Powless hook met him and after some Deficalty arrived in the morning at the works half past three, stormed them without more loss than two men killed and five wounded, we killed about fifty took 150 prisoners, 9 officials and then retired to the new Bridg [North Hackensack].⁵ The distance of 22 miles, John Page was among the Prisoners."

It is significantly ironic that, after the success of the Paulus Hook expedition, *Rivington's Gazette*⁶ of August 21, 1779, should have published a news item which claimed that Ensign Barett of the Seventieth Regiment, with a small detachment, captured Captain Meals at the "Three Pigeons"

with the orders and dispositions of Lee in his possession. The Meals here referred to might well have been some Continental "left overs", and the marching orders the product of an imagination kindled by the grog of a wily and intrepid innkeeper.

On July 21, 1780, "Mad Anthony" Wayne⁷ ordered Col. Moylan to take his stand at the "Three Pigeons" to cover up any maneuver by the enemy from the south, while he made his futile attack on the blockhouse. Moylan was instructed to drive off to the north as many cattle as possible. In this he was more successful than his superior officer, for his men drove off "several hundred quadrupeds, consisting of horses, horned cattle, sheep and hogs"⁸ to Liberty Pole (Englewood).

In the early nineteenth century the old hotel was the stop-over for the mail coach and for passengers of Andrew Van Bushkirk's "Flying Machine" stage line between Hoboken and Hackensack on the old "pike." Its sign,⁹ surmounted by three pigeons, bore in large white letters the legend: "Three Pigeons Hotel." By the middle of the century it was in its heyday, having become a popular place of assembly on special occasions. In Civil War days, when troops mustered into the service camped in white tents in its immediate neighborhood on the old Doremus estate, the genial landlord Garry Day¹⁰ required four assistants to keep his beverage bank running on schedule.

Washington's Birthday, however, was the annual gala event of the year, for then the "Old Tops" held their colorful gatherings here. In the great hall appropriately decorated for the occasion a huge gilded top was wound up and suspended from the centerpiece of the ceiling at the beginning of the festivities. Throughout the evening it would spin, while merry couples danced and whirled about below it into the early hours of the morning when the top had spun itself out.

"Shades of the Old Three Pigeons, how stupendous! those muster dinners, those Old Top suppers, those barbecues, those clambakes, those oyster cracks!" Thus did Anthony Ryder¹¹ in a centennial lecture delivered in the Plank Road Chapel¹² of Old Grove Church in 1876, eloquently summarize his memories of the old hotel.

When James H. Symes, progressive West New Yorker, purchased the historic New Durham tract¹³ from the Van Wagenen estate on November 24, 1893, the "Three Pigeons" was standing as it did in those exciting days of Lee and Wayne. New buildings were springing up around it until the early part of the present century when it was demolished. Today it remains a pleasant langsyne among old timers.

An Affair of Honor

*"I was an admirer of General Hamilton, and I sicken
when I think of our political broils, slanders and enmities."*

—WASHINGTON IRVING

THE TURN of the century witnessed a great national tragedy enacted in the southeastern part of Bergen Woods at Weehawken¹. The stage was set, not on the summit of the cliff, as many tourists are led to believe when they see the bust of Alexander Hamilton resting upon the sandstone boulder over which it is alleged he had fallen, but on a small, grassy shelf about twenty feet above tidewater with the cliff as a gloomy backdrop



Old Dueling Ground about 1810

and an old cedar as an obscuring shelter. Scene of numerous duels from 1799 to 1845, this bloody ground remained in its primitive condition until about 1870. Then it was partly removed to give way to the roadbed of

the New York and Fort Lee Railroad which ran along the bank of the river as far as Guttenberg. Inaccessible from above or below by land, it was ideally secluded from the eyes of prying neighbors and intrusive officers of the law. The only approach was by boat from the river side over a badly eroded flight of steps. Here, on July 11, 1804, Burr, whose presidential aspirations in 1800 had been blocked largely through the efforts of Alexander Hamilton, mortally wounded the great Federalist leader.² Hamilton is said to have provoked Burr's challenge by a series of hostile letters which appeared in the *Albany Register*³ on April 24, when Burr was running for governor of New York. Political jealousy, coupled with the indiscreet gossiping of Dr. Charles D. Cooper, brought about the well-known tragic ending.⁴

A few months after the duel, the St. Andrew's Society erected a monument, a small obelisk enclosed by an iron railing, which was visited by thousands until it was deliberately destroyed by local residents opposed



Hamilton Monument

to dueling. Some time after the desecration, the marble slab from the base of the obelisk was discovered, according to Winfield,⁵ by Hugh Maxwell, President of the St. Andrew's Society, in the shop of a New York junk dealer. Maxwell secured the lost marker and presented it to James G. King, owner of the old King Mansion at the south end of the bluff overlooking the once celebrated Elysian Fields of Hoboken near the entrance of the present Lincoln Tunnel.

Many years later, Daniel Wallace and William Mitchell hauled the brown boulder⁶ on a stone sled from the original dueling ground below the cliff to its present location in the little park on the bluff at Hamilton Avenue. In 1894, the present monument⁷ directly above the original dueling ground was erected. The new bronze tablet has the following inscription: "Upon this Stone rested the head of the Patriot, Soldier, Statesman, and Jurist, Alexander Hamilton, after the duel with Aaron Burr, fought July 11, 1804."

“Fulton’s Folly”

*A century of Hudson fame
Which Irving’s fancy seals;
Whose ripples murmur Morse’s name
And flash to Fulton’s wheels.*

—WALLACE BRUCE

THREE YEARS after the Hamilton-Burr duel another drama of international commercial importance was enacted on the already historic waters of the Hudson River. On August 11, 1807, Robert Fulton demonstrated to the world at large and to a skeptical group of local witnesses in particular that steam navigation was practical. On that day he piloted his celebrated “Clermont” from the shores of “Little Old New York” to Albany at a



Fulton’s “Clermont”

speed of almost five miles an hour! Through the success of this “experiment” Fulton’s partner, the illustrious “Chancellor” Robert R. Livingston, secured a virtual monopoly to navigate steam vessels on the Hudson and

other waters in and contiguous to the State of New York. This monopoly was granted by the New York State Legislature.

Enterprising steamboat competitors challenged this "privilege" actively, but the power of the Livingston-Fulton interests was not broken until 1824. Nine years after Fulton's death, "Commodore" Vanderbilt, the strongest rival of them all, brought the issue to a head in the chambers of the Supreme Court of the United States. Here, with brilliant oratory, Daniel Webster championed the cause of the Vanderbilt interests in the celebrated case, *Gibbons vs. Ogden*.¹ Chief Justice John Marshall penned the Court's famous decision which removed the control of river transport from the states and placed it under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, since the case affected matters of interstate commerce. That decision ushered in a long era of modern river transportation which contributed greatly to the mutual growth of New York and Hudson County.

“A-hunting We Must Go”

*Woodman, spare that tree!
Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me
And I'll protect it now.*

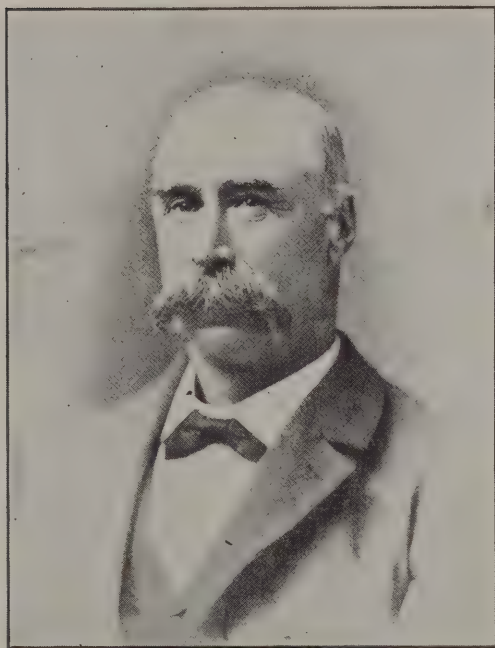
—GEORGE P. MORRIS

BEFORE 1840, when Hudson County was set off from Bergen County by the Legislature, the entire Palisades ridge and river bank of North Hudson was still densely wooded, and the early settlers in the Slonga region engaged in woodcutting and hunting. Michael Carling,¹ a pioneer from Kingston, New York, settled on the old Carling tract in the northern Oak Cliff section of what is now known as West New York. On June 3, 1828,² he acquired this land from the administrators of the old Garrabrant estate. He married Margaret, a daughter of John Bartholf.³ The latter by force of circumstances had been compelled to aid the British during the Revolution by carrying powder to ward off Wayne's attack on the blockhouse. Carling, who lived to the ripe age of eighty-two, was an enthusiastic trap-shooter and was admired for his skill in marksmanship. His sons had well-trained hunting dogs and were noted for their exploits in woodcraft. More than sixty-five years ago one of his daughters gave the following account to Anthony Ryder:⁴

“My brothers were fond of gunning on the land for pigeons and robins; basketfuls of these birds were sold by them in the city market. Father was more partial to the river. I've seen him with a white cap upon his head, with a gun in his hand, walk down to his little white duck boat, get in and paddle quietly to within gunshot of these waterfowl. He used to fetch plenty of ducks home. The pillows and beds in our house were made of duck feathers, and they made beautiful beds. Occasionally, he had the luck to get a wild goose.”

Michael Carling's daughter, Leah, married Frederick Fowler Dobbs in

1836. The latter had emigrated from Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson where in 1698 his ancestors, *Jan Dobbs en zyn huys vrou* (his wife) Abigail had been members of the famous old Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow⁵ and had given the little village of Dobbs Ferry its name. Long before the Revolution another ancestor, Jeremiah Dobbs, had operated the little ferry between that village and Sneden's Landing on the west bank of the Hudson, named after Mollie Sneden⁶. In the days of the Revolution, that fearless ferry mistress occupied the old stone house which today stands at the river bank in the quaint little hamlet of Palisade Village, New York.



Thomas J. Dobbs

On July 8, 1846, ten years after his marriage to Leah Carling, Frederick F. Dobbs purchased from Charles F. Durant⁷, a tract of land between the present Bergenline and Palisade Avenues. This was approached by a short road, known for many years as Dobbs' Lane (now Sixty-third Street). This tract lay between the old Van Vorst estate, which originally extended from the Bergen Line to the Hudson River northward from the present Sixty-third Street to about Sixty-sixth Street, and the property of William Watson Niles, from whom Niles Avenue, the only important cross road in eastern Union Township, received its name.

Thomas Jefferson Dobbs⁸, son of Frederick, was born on the Carling tract near the river on March 7, 1841, two years before the name of this section, now within the confines of modern West New York, was officially changed from Bergen Woods to North Bergen, and twenty years before it was set off from North Bergen as Union Township. His early occupation was shad-fishing. In 1860, he established himself in the quarrying business.

After serving in the Union navy until the close of the Civil War, he resumed his quarrying business and later with equal success operated two ice houses at Dobbs' Pond where he sometimes stored as much as 3,300 tons of ice in a winter. In later years he served Union Township as Tax Collector, Town Treasurer, School Trustee and Town Committeeman. A considerable number of descendants of Thomas J. Dobbs are residing in West New York and vicinity today.



Old Weehawken Ferry—the "Midland" and "Oswego"

Old Weehawken Ferry

*Their wheels no more the waters churn;
The throbbing engine's pulse is still;
The helm no longer guides their course,
In answer to the pilot's will.*

—HENRY COLLINS BROWN

IN THE middle of the last century, prominent businessmen of Hudson County and vicinity saw the possibility of developing the river front territory of the present town. In 1852, according to an article appearing in the columns of the *New York Evening Express*,¹ a group of men including Judge Francis Price; his son Rodman McCauley Price², Governor of New Jersey in 1853; Dudley S. Gregory, first mayor of Jersey City; William Watson Niles, progressive Vermont-born lawyer and financier; Louis Becker, Barney Bertram, General Elijah Ward and William Cooper, President of the Weehawken Land and Ferry Association, developers of Guttenberg, incorporated the Weehawken Ferry Company to link Union Township, now West New York, with New York City. A charter was granted by the New Jersey Legislature, and a ten year lease issued to Judge Price by Comptroller Flagg of New York for the use of a plot of land at the foot of West Forty-second Street as the New York terminal of the new enterprise.

The first ferry service to Union Township was begun on January 1, 1859, supplying a much needed additional crossing midway between the ferries of Hoboken on the south and Fort Lee, the old Huguenot Peter Bourdett's pre-Revolutionary crossing at the north. That ancient landing was in a beautiful glen just south of the entrance to Palisades Interstate Park about a mile north of the present Fort Lee Ferry at Edgewater.

The need for a new crossing at Union Township was most keenly felt, since the old Bull's Ferry near Guttenberg had discontinued operation

in the early 1800's. After an uninterrupted service of over a century from its terminal south of King's Bluff, the equally ancient horse propelled Weehawken ferry of Stephen Bayard, had likewise ceased to exist.



Old Team Boat

The new Weehawken Ferry Company's landing place was in Slaugh's Meadow at the foot of the present Fifty-eighth Street of West New York. This locality was named after Jacob Slaugh³, that ambitious individual who had made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the tyrannical Kieft, predecessor to Peter Stuyvesant. For this rash act he was shot and his head stuck on a post.

The first boats, the "Lydia" and "Abbie", both paddle wheelers of the pre-walking-beam type, were purchased from the old Union Ferry Company on the East River. Their names were changed to "Weehawken" and "Hackensack". Later in the Seventies came the "Roslyn", "Midland" and "Oswego".

The *New York Evening Express*⁴ in an article appearing on April 6, 1852, ridiculed this new project in the following words: "We are not read up in the details of the new enterprise, but it strikes us that if the object

of the new company is limited to the accommodation of the inhabitants, they will have a very easy task to perform, for about the only inhabitants one finds at Weehawken⁵ just now are some venerable oak and elm trees. As it is presumed *they* don't intend to emigrate to New York the question is very generally asked, "Where is the patronage to come from that is to offset the proposed outlay of half a million dollars?" " Later developments proved that the *Evening Express* had underestimated the possibilities of the new venture, for it turned out to be mutually advantageous to Union Township and New York. In addition to its interest in river transportation, the Ferry Company had acquired, largely through the efforts of Judge Francis Price, vast real estate holdings on the crest of the Palisades—practically the entire area of the present town south of Sixtieth Street to the Union City town line. Here, extensive quarrying was undertaken. Bluestone City sprang up practically overnight. The great bulk of hard-surfaced Belgian bluestone blocks used in paving lower Manhattan's thoroughfares was quarried in Union Township and exported on barges in lots of thousands from the old Weehawken Ferry.

St. Joseph's of the Palisades, one of the largest and most beautiful churches in West New York, was constructed of this native bluestone during the last days of the quarries, and the original home of Madonna della Libera Church, on Hudson Boulevard, was built of similar material quarried in the western part of the town.

When Boulevard East was first opened to the "pedal-pushers" and horseback riders of the "Gay Nineties", the retaining walls along the skyline promenade were constructed of the same trap rock for its entire length from Weehawken to Hudson County Park.

Judge Francis Price, pioneer adventurer in the great ferry enterprise, who had previously purchased many acres of real estate along the shore front, occupied a cottage on the brow of the hill near the present Thomas Donnelly Memorial Park. This homestead was popularly referred to as "The Cedars"⁶, for it stood amidst a grove of beautiful cedar trees. From the native bluestone, he erected (before 1850) a small land office, still standing today. He intended this as a gate house to a more pretentious mansion, which, though hopefully begun, never reached completion. After

Judge Price's death, "The Cedars" served for a time as a saloon and later burned to the ground.

* * * * *

Since the days of the Civil War many people have been fascinated by the old gate house on Park Avenue facing Fifty-ninth Street. According



Old Gate House

to tradition, its sombre, gray walls for a brief time sheltered the notorious "Jim" Fisk, accomplice of Jay Gould in the "Black Friday" plot of 1869. Fisk is said to have used this hideout just before he was shot in January, 1872, by his former partner "Ed" Stokes in the lobby of New York's Grand Central Hotel after a quarrel involving financial matters and "Josie" Mansfield, the object of their mutual affection.

* * * * *

Behind the old gate house and facing the Boulevard are the foundation walls of the stone crusher operated by the old Ferry Company. Here, the Palisade "chiprock" was crushed to the desired sizes for surfacing the roads in the vicinity. In its last years of service (about 1916) it was operated by Gustave Thiel and Anthony Markert.

In 1927, when real estate interests threatened to build apartment houses on the east side of the Boulevard and to obscure the unparalleled view of the New York skyline, a vigilant committee was organized under the slogan, "Save the Palisades". Public-spirited citizens under the leadership of Thomas Donnelly led this successful crusade. As a result, West New York can boast of a number of attractively landscaped parks overlooking the majestic Hudson River. The largest of these, Thomas Donnelly Memorial Park, was dedicated to the memory of this great leader. His memorial bust occupies a prominent place in the park. The "Save the Palisades" Committee, headed by Will Leeger, is still active to safeguard the natural beauty of the historic ridge in North Hudson.



One of Many Small Parks on the Edge of the Palisades



Andrew Metrose

New York from the Heights of Jersey

“Thy Woods and Templed Hills”

WHAT REMARKABLE CHANGES the iron hand of industry and the demands of modern civilization have wrought upon the natural beauty of North Hudson's waterfront! Even the “eternal” rock of the Palisades, which since times immemorial survived the erosive action of the glacier and withstood for centuries the “icy fang” and blast of many a long winter, could not withstand the march of human progress. The American poet, Fitz-Greene Halleck¹, who loved to walk along the river bank in this vicinity, has preserved for posterity the original charm of this region in the beautiful lines:

“Weehawken! In thy mountain scenery yet,
All we adore of Nature in her wild
And frolic hour of infancy is met;
And never has a summer's morning smiled
Upon a lovelier scene . . .
The city bright below; and far away
Sparkling in golden light, its own romantic bay.
Tall spire and glittering roof, and battlement,
And banners floating in the sunny air,
And white sails o'er the calm blue waters bent,
Green isle and circling shore, are blended there,
In wild reality. When life is old,
And many a scene forgot, the heart will hold
Its memory of this.”

But the stately trees, those silent sentinels which at one time stood on the crest of Oak Cliff, in their natural desire to “save the Palisades”, could well have shared these sentiments of Rudyard Kipling:

“Children we are of the great god Pan
Who marvel much by the river;
How ruthless man can mar the plan
Of the wise and bounteous giver.
We hear afar the sounds of war
As rocks they rend and shiver;
They blast and mine and rudely scar
The pleasant banks of the river.”

At the foot of the Palisades below Thomas Donnelly Memorial Park and west of the railroad tracks, there is still to be seen an old farm house, the last remnant of a tiny settlement which sprang up in Civil War days. In addition to the old ferry road that once wound its way upward to old New York Avenue (now Sixtieth Street) the little hamlet by the riverside boasted of but two streets—Stone and Broad. Here in the Sixties, Dave Pollock, brother of Freeholder Francis Pollock, maintained a shooting pavilion patronized by German sport enthusiasts, who, before the opening of Schuetzen Park, came over the old ferry in droves with their “shootin’ irons” to hold Schuetzenfest contests in that beautiful sylvan grove. In summer and autumn these pre-Audubon sportsmen, clad in their colorful costumes—feathered Tyrolean hats, gay corduroys and gaiters—brought down many a feathered songster in this wooded section of the town. When amid singing and laughter, they returned after a busy day’s activity to the spacious pavilion, their genial host—himself a native Gothamite—smilingly served them with a pleasant repast and many a glass of beer. In later years, this delightful haunt, a favorite of the old New York target companies, had a number of splendid resorts catering to the taste of the marksmen of the metropolis. Prominent among these was the old “Oak Cliff Hotel” of Fred Walker, brother of Guttenberg’s mayor Herman Walker—What a contrast to the busy freight yards of the twentieth century!

The small community, indeed, was bustling with activity before the railroad covered most of the area once known as Slaugh’s Meadow. Within the village itself Michael Henry, affectionately known as “Rich Uncle Mike”, opened a grocery store, and Henry and Meta Grimm, who later established themselves on Bergenline Avenue above Dallytown, operated a restaurant patronized by quarrymen working in the vicinity.

Directly south of old Broad Street was the first baseball diamond, an open field within the present boundaries of West New York popularly known as “The Cinders”. Here, many well known ball players of that era “swatted the pill”. Later, the diamond² was fenced in and spectators had to pay an admission fee. Numerous so-called “arm customers” tried to circumvent this fee by climbing the surrounding trees, but by tarring the trunks, the strategy was astutely overcome.

The sketch of old Weehawken Ferry, an interesting item of Americana of the mid-Seventies of the last century, is the work of Andrew Melrose,



Weehawken Ferry about 1875

artist of Tower Hill. On the left beside the ferry slip with its twinkling lantern³, is seen the old wind-blown, rickety ferry house and Hunter's Pavilion. In the distance above the ferry slip, on the crest of the hill, Koehler and Kamena's Old White Brewery, at one time a prominent landmark at the Guttenberg town line, is visible. The companion picture, "A Short Cut", presents a close range view of the Palisades, an old stone crusher on the left and, high on the summit, a representative of that ubiquitous species of domestic animal common in those days, enjoying a grandstand view of the river and city. Concerning these idyllic creatures the *Jersey City Evening Journal* of January 23, 1875 had the following to report:

"Goats are numerous and a nuisance. They are known as 'Mauds',



A Short Cut

for they have such a come-into-the-garden-way about them, much to the detriment of the young shrubbery.”

The neighborhood of the ferry was periodically subject to the depredations of the Modoc gang of highjackers, who came over from the city to relieve the good housewives of the heavy bundles of food and household utensils brought from the city market. Only after a vigorous campaign had been waged against these second cousins of the notorious “Wyos”, “Knuckle Dusters” and other “till-tipping” gangs of the metropolis, were they finally driven out of Jersey.

The name which this band of ruffians assumed, probably came from Chief “Steamboat Frank” Modoc⁴, one of the two hundred Oregon Indians who killed General Canby during a peace parley in the Modoc War of 1873.

The *Hudson Dispatch* of September 6, 1938, gives the following interesting account of the extermination of the Modocs:

“In the early Eighties came one Richard Dobbs, then a constable and

said to be an uncle of the late Roger Dobbs, one-time officer in the Hudson County Court House.

“Dobbs decided the Modocs had had their fling and spent a few days tracking them down to tell them. The boys didn’t think so, however, and tried intimidation, which, far from being effective, served only to strengthen Dobbs’ resolve.

“The Modocs made two mistakes of which the constable was quick to take advantage: they didn’t carry guns, and there was only one entrance to their cave.

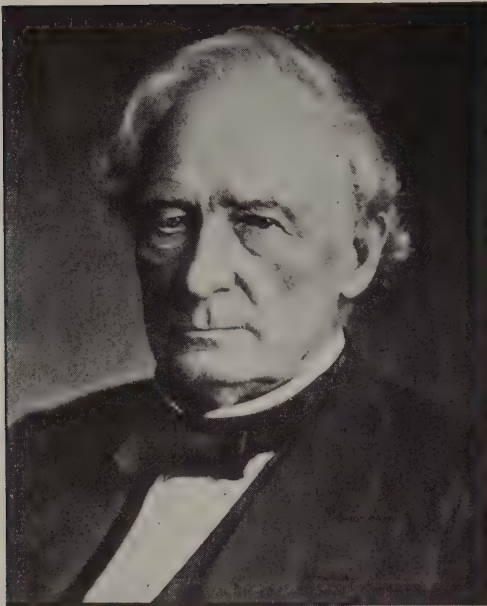
“Waiting until he knew the majority of the gang was in the cave, Dobbs found a comfortable rock, lit his pipe if he smoked and, with a shotgun across his knee, sat for two days and starved the Modocs into submission.

“He haled them into court and every one received a jail sentence on charges ranging from petty to grand larceny.”

Oak Cliff

*Amid thy forest solitudes, one climbs
O'er crags that proudly tower above the deep,
And knows that sense of danger which sublimes
The breathless moment, when his daring step
Is on the verge of the cliff, and he can hear
The low dash of the waves with startled ear.*

—FITZ-GREENE HALLECK



Dudley S. Gregory

THE COUNTRY SEAT of Dudley S. Gregory¹, first mayor of Jersey City and one of the directors of the Weehawken Ferry Company, stood at Oak Cliff, at the foot of the present Sixty-fourth Street about fifty feet below the level of Boulevard East, long before this scenic highway was constructed and opened to horse and bicycle traffic. It was situated north of the present Police Rifle Range, facing southward, not only to get the full benefit of the winter sunlight, but also to provide an unobstructed view of the lower Hudson River.

As highest bidder Mayor Gregory had acquired Oak Cliff on October 30, 1843, from the estate of John Van Vorst² for the then fabulous sum of \$6,100. The tract, which included the river front, was slightly over forty-two acres. Today, this area contains the valuable residential section of the northeastern part of the town,

including the former Monitor Park, and extends from about Sixty-sixth Street to Westover Place between Park Avenue and the Hudson River.

Mayor Gregory had convenient access to Jersey City from his Oak Cliff estate by boat, using his private dock at old Brower's Point where the brick building of the marine repair shop of the New York Central is today. The entire acreage remained in his possession until 1864, when he conveyed it to Nathaniel Dole³, who at the time managed the interests of the Weehawken Ferry Company. In December, 1870, Dole and the Ferry Company⁴ conveyed part of the land in Slaugh's Meadow to the New York, Oswego and Midland Railroad Company, the first railway route from New Jersey to central New York and Pennsylvania, via Middletown and Ogdensburg. The Midland began operations on August 18, 1873, from the Jersey City terminal of the Pennsylvania Railroad via Bergen Junction in the Marion section of Jersey City and thence northward over the route of the West Shore Railroad. The Company maintained a long "switch back"⁵ in the locality of the present West Shore freight yards, connecting it with Forty-second Street by the Weehawken Ferry, which at that time still had its terminal north of the grain elevator. By December, 1872, a tunnel⁶ through the Palisades was to have been completed to avoid the round-about route via Bergen Junction. Financial difficulties prevented the realization of this plan.

On September 1, 1868, that shrewd financier, Jay Gould, who together with his partner "Jim" Fisk had seized control of the bankrupt Erie in 1868, knowing full well that he would be made chairman of the board of directors within two months, purchased the Oak Cliff estate from Jules Delacroix⁷ of Newberryport, Massachusetts, for \$350,000. Coupled with the deed was an agreement, made with Delacroix, to build within one year a landing to provide ferry service to Twenty-fourth Street, New York. On the same day, he made a compact with the Weehawken Ferry Company⁸ for a twenty-five foot right of way for tracks to connect with the Erie Railroad at the south within one year. Gould did not carry out his part of the agreement, and on March 22nd of the following year sold his interests in Oak Cliff to the National Stockyard Company⁹. He reserved, however, the right of way secured for the Erie.

Prior to this, the National Stockyard Company had leased the property, and the old Gregory homestead served as headquarters¹⁰ for its agents. Cattle pens were erected below the hill, while the sloping terrain near the present Police Rifle Range offered easy access to the high lands above where cattle grazed in wild and colorful confusion. A slaughterhouse was established at Guttenberg, to which in 1875, a reservoir¹¹ was added. The Ferry Company also operated a special "Noah's Ark" to transport livestock to a slaughterhouse at the foot of West Forty-first Street.

While the stockyard was becoming more and more popular with the Manhattan butchers and business improved from year to year, the fortunes of the Midland Railroad took a bad turn. The Panic of 1873 left its mark. In April of that year, the Midland issued \$2,500,000 worth of gold bonds, redeemable within forty years, bearing interest at seven per cent, payable semi-annually. Samuel J. Tilden, the unsuccessful presidential candidate in the disputed centennial election of 1876, purchased these bonds. Unable to meet expenses and in default on the first payment of interest in October, 1873, as also in 1874 and 1875, the corporation went into bankruptcy in June of that year. Garret A. Hobart¹² and James McCulloh were appointed receivers. Action was instituted in the New York State Supreme Court by Conrad N. Jordan¹³, agent for Tilden in July, 1875. Finally, on February 21, 1880, the 200 acre terminal¹⁴ under foreclosure came into Tilden's possession. Thus ended the first attempt to establish a railroad terminal in West New York territory.

Rivalry along the River

*The Iron Horse, on ribboned course, dethroned the River Queen;
The fight continued on the rails with competition keen.
The "Commodore" had lost a war to Fisk and Gould and Drew,
But victory came to Vanderbilt and Chauncey M. Depew.*

—W. T. E.

FROM THE RUINS of the defunct Midland Railroad, a new and vigorous enterprise emerged in 1881. The New York, West Shore and Buffalo Railroad Company completed the 425 mile roadbed between Hudson County and Buffalo at a total cost of \$55,000,000¹. This company was formed by merger and consolidation with the North River Railroad and the Jersey City and Albany Railroad. General Horace Porter, former aide-de-camp of Ulysses S. Grant and inventor of the "ticket chopper" still in use at the ferry terminal, was its first president.

From the West Shore and Ontario Terminal Company², facilities were leased³, jointly with the New York, Ontario and Western, for a period of 99 years. The West Shore agreed in the lease to assume the Terminal Company's bonded indebtedness. Through this legal instrument, 165 acres⁴ on the crest of the Palisades were acquired by the West Shore for building lots. The land, formerly the property of the Weehawken Ferry Company, extended southward from the present Sixtieth Street to the Union City line and included the Monitor Park⁵ section of modern West New York.

Handicapped from the outset as the old Midland had been by the natural obstacle of the Palisades, the West Shore was obliged to run its first trains from Jersey City, via Bergen Junction. On June 4, 1883, service was begun to Albany with much fanfare and celebration along the route, particularly at Newburgh and Kingston. The first railroad on the west bank of the Hudson had become a reality.

Meanwhile, in February, 1881, operations were begun on the tunnel⁶ through the Palisades at the West New York town line. Bored through 4,000 feet of solid gneiss at an average depth of over 140 feet below street level, the great cavern⁷ was built at a cost of over a million dollars. For over two and a half years, hundreds of men from North Hudson, among them John E. Otis, first mayor of the incorporated town of West New York, worked on this approach to the lowlands of North Bergen until its completion in September, 1883.

During the same year, the present West Shore Terminal and Ferry House was built, and in 1884, the old ferry site at West New York was



West Shore Terminal in 1891 — Eldorado Viaduct under Construction

abandoned. A new road from the heights of Clifton⁸, known as Clifton Drive (now Pershing Road), was blasted into the solid face of the cliff. In 1884, the mammoth grain elevator⁹ at the foot of the present Fifty-fourth Street was constructed on a foundation of seven thousand piles which varied in length from eighty-five to one hundred and fifteen feet.

The West Shore took over the old ferry boats "Midland" and "Oswego", adding the "Kingston", "Newburgh", "Albany", and "Buffalo" to complete its first marine division. On January 1, 1884, the "Newburgh" made the first trip from the new terminal to Forty-second Street. Service was also maintained to Franklin Street before the opening of the Cortlandt Street route. Old-timers will remember the "Buffalo", last of the side-wheelers. Until about 1920, this picturesque craft ran to the New York terminal from her West New York slip¹⁰ near the Wheeler and Wilcox "lardie" at the old Gold Dust sign. A few years later she ended her career as a coal carrier at Norfolk, Virginia, while her sister, the "Albany", served during the 1920's on the Bay Ridge route between Brooklyn and Staten Island.

* * * * *

This auspicious beginning promised a successful venture in transportation on the west bank of the Hudson. The promise, however, did not materialize because of the ruinous competition with the New York Central on the river's eastern bank. *The New York Times* clearly foresaw the conflict. In an editorial on May 27, 1883, this paper made the following comments:

"The West Shore people are likely to need all their strength and skill to pull through. An old road is like any old established business—it has run deep ruts for itself in the channels of trade, and a new concern coming in does not easily draw trade from it. The Central¹¹ has been growing through forty years; it has gone through all the struggles of early youth and its incident mistakes and loose ways; it has gradually increased into a vast property with widely established connections, and the rival road across the Hudson will have to struggle for all it takes from it . . . The Central could starve that road into bankruptcy if only it chose to pay the cost of doing it."

Hardly had the new rolling stock of the West Shore begun to move, when the struggle for its existence began. Under the presidency of William H. Vanderbilt, son of the great "Commodore" who had smashed the Fulton-Livingston monopoly sixty years before, the big opening gun was fired on the eastern bank of the Hudson. The Central promptly cut its passenger rates to one cent per mile and reduced its freight rates fifty per

cent in the total war to "crush the competitor in the cradle". The West Shore was obliged to pursue the same policy with the result that it was forced into bankruptcy¹². It had been unable to meet the interest on its bonded indebtedness. The road which had conquered the natural obstacle of the Palisades was now locked in a titanic life and death struggle with a powerful rival.

The merry war continued and "ticket scalpers,"¹³ particularly "Franks" and "Lansings", flourished on New York's Broadway from Chambers Street to Canal Street at the expense of both combatants. When it was rumored that other interests sought control of the West Shore, William H. Vanderbilt clearly outlined his strategy¹⁴ as follows:

"The Central can pay as much as anybody, I guess, but if some one else wants it [the West Shore], he must understand that the war is not yet settled, and will not be until we have the West Shore. We would just as lief fight new men, and perhaps, rather, if they have some money. This fighting a bankrupt railroad is tedious work, I tell you, but no one shall buy the West Shore to make money out of us. And they shall not have any of our roads until we have that one. . . .

"I tell you, I look on the West Shore Road just as I would on a man whose hand I had found in my money drawer — a common miserable thief."

On the golden autumn morning of October 1, 1885, hostilities came to an abrupt end in the Orange County Court House at Newburgh. Here, the New York Supreme Court ordered the sale of the bankrupt "victim" as a unit for not less than \$22,000,000 and appointed Abram S. Cassidy as Referee. On the 24th of the next month at the same county seat¹⁵ Vanderbilt's objective was legally attained. In the columns of the *Hudson County Democrat-Advertiser* of November 28, 1885, there appeared the following short notice:

"J. Pierrepont Morgan, Chauncey M. Depew, and Ashbel Green bought in the West Shore on Tuesday for the upset price of \$22,000,000. This completes the Vanderbilt 'scooping-in-process'."

The new President of the Central, Chauncey M. Depew, that celebrated after-dinner speaker who in later years in the capacity of United States senator delivered many a brilliant oration, particularly at the dedication of Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty and the opening of the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, made the shortest speech¹⁶ of his eventful career when he said:

"I am only here to offer myself as a bloodless sacrifice for the benefit of the bondholders and stockholders of the two roads."

Little Old West New York

ONE IMPORTANT settlement¹ west of Bergenline Avenue, located on the original patent of Mathevis and Hendrick Newkirk², must not escape attention. "Little Old West New York", like its mother community across the Hudson, was destined to give its name to the greater incorporated town in 1898. In that same epoch-making year, the Island of Manhattan, once popularly known as "Little Old New York", bestowed its time-honored name upon the five boroughs as a collective entity, Greater New York.

As a geographical designation the name West New York goes back as far as 1854, when it first appeared on Robert C. Bacot's *Topographical Map of Hudson County*.³ In 1855, the name is found on the real estate map of the West New York Land Verein⁴ accompanied by this certificate:

"We do hereby certify this to be the original map referred to in two certain agreements bearing date the 17th day of March 1855, one of which is made and executed by and between the undersigned with their respective wives and the West New York Land Verein; and the other is made and executed by and between the undersigned Henry F. Maackens and Peter Mechler with their wives and the said West New York Land Verein."

(L. S.) H. F. Maackens
Peter Mechler
John Schaidler

The settlement is referred to by Dr. Benjamin C. Taylor⁵ in 1857. This is probably the first time that the name West New York appears in written history. In 1875, Winfield⁶ writes: "West New York lies on the westerly brow of the hill back of Guttenberg".

According to Harvey⁷, Conrad Bickhard was a pioneer in this early settlement in 1853. This reference is substantiated by a quaint tax receipt,



Conrad Bickhard

dated December 12, 1853, in which he appears as "North Bergen taxpayer number ten" with the misspelled name Conrad Beecot. He was a carpenter and cabinet-maker by trade, having received a premium for good scholarship in architecture. In the summer of 1866, old Public School Number One, the first one-room frame schoolhouse in District Number Ten, was planned and built under his direction on Maackens (Madison) Street just south of present Sixty-second Street. Conrad Bickhard was one of the five founding members of Columbia Reformed Church, which ministered to the spiritual needs of the German-

speaking parishioners of Union Hill and outlying districts. Locally, he was a member of West New York's first fire department, Friendship Engine Company. His obituary, as it appeared in *The Daily Press* (Jersey City) on October 19, 1874, is given below for its historic interest:

"An Early Settler Departed"

"Twenty-one years ago Mr. Conrad Bickhard came across from New York, cut a path through the woods to the place now known as West New York⁸, built himself a house and settled. Yesterday at this same house was a large assemblage of people from all the country round about. They came in carriages, on horseback and on foot. Mr. Bickhard by his honorable life had endeared himself to these people, and the assemblage yesterday was to follow his remains to the grave. In the procession were the members of the Seven Wise Men, Palisade Lodge

F. and A. M. of Union Hill, North Hudson Lodge D. O. H. [Deutscher Orden der Harugari] and the membership of Friendship Engine Company Number One, of West New York, all of which societies deceased was a member. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Mr. Justin at his church in Union Hill and the remains were interred in the Cemetery of Grove Church."

Early West New York had but one cross street, Pierce Avenue (now Sixty-first Street), named after Franklin Pierce, who was at that time President of the United States. This rough and unimproved road served



Pierce Avenue Looking West

as the old town's main street running from Bergenline Avenue across Dallytown Road (now Hudson Boulevard) into what in later years was known as the "Jungles"⁹ of North Bergen. In those days Van Buren Place was known as Mechler Street¹⁰, Madison Street as Maackens Street, Jackson Street as King Street and Adams Street as People Street. The names of Polk, Jefferson and Washington Streets date back to the early days of the town.

With the arrival of new settlers, refugees of the Revolution of 1848 in Europe, the population grew rapidly. The pioneers of this old section

of the town were almost all Germans, and the little village might well have been called, "Leedle Chairmany". John Mueller came here in 1857, establishing himself in the grocery and baking business. He found¹¹ that roads were few and rough, game and trees plentiful, and that a mere footpath ran from the lower end of Dallytown to Kagel's on the Bergenwood Road¹² near Pierce Avenue. Charles Schultz was another genial old settler at whose cottage neighbors would congregate to listen to tales of golden California and of his native country.

With the arrival, in 1867, of Theodore Ristow¹³, dealer in seed, leaf and Spanish tobacco, West New York had its first building boom. In the early Seventies, he built a compact group of eleven frame houses, known as Ristow Row, on the east side of Madison Street. North of these dwellings stood the home of Mary Darling, mother of Ord and John Sidney Darling, prominently identified with the early government of Union Township.

Garret Fink, the first chief of the volunteer fire fighters in the Gay Nineties and Township Committeeman in 1884, settled on Pierce Avenue at the corner of Polk Street in 1866. Here he opened the "Union Assembly Rooms" in which many of the early township committee meetings and social functions were held.

No history of West New York would be complete, unless it included Stewart Hamilton, last of the "old-timers". In his "Fort" on Adams Street he lived the life of a hermit, the sole survivor of a once large family. On August 9, 1944, Mrs. Minnie Smith, bringing in his meals, found the lifeless form of the aged "Squire" on the kitchen floor. Death had come suddenly from natural causes. Hamilton's only companion in his little house was "Wrinkles", the pet English bulldog of Mrs. Smith's son Arthur, who had gone off to the colors.

Built about 1870, the Hamilton "hermitage" offered a quaint contrast to the comparatively modern buildings in the vicinity. Even today, it stands uninhabited and forlorn, without any of the modern improvements which came with the increase in population. "Squire" Hamilton had no running water, gas, or electricity. If the street light did not offer sufficient illumination for the home, his kerosene lamp proved adequate for his

needs. Gas he did not need for cooking, since a carpenter has enough scrap wood for fuel. In the rear of his property at a stone's throw from the house, fresh water was easily obtained from the well, which served him for many a year.

In its present state, the dilapidated homestead with its deserted well calls to mind memories of the quiet home life of a respected citizen and distinguished Justice of the Peace.

According to Hopkin's *Atlas*¹⁴ of 1873, only two buildings stood on Bergenline Avenue north of present Sixtieth Street. One was owned by a man named Potsches; the other was John Schaidler's Hotel which occupied



Old Town Hall

the land later to be used for West New York's first Town Hall. In 1863, the dance hall of this old hotel was used as a school room¹⁵ for District Number Nine, until more suitable quarters were found on Bulls ferry Road at Westover Place.

Weehawken Village

IN THE early Sixties, northern Union Township had another real estate development directly east of Bergenline Avenue, known as Weehawken Village. Niles Avenue, the eastern extension of Pierce Avenue, in those days the only crosstown road in the township between Bergenline Avenue and Bullserry Road, was its principal thoroughfare. It received its name from William Watson Niles¹, personal attorney of Samuel J. Tilden and Secretary of the old Weehawken Ferry Company.

In September, 1858, Niles had his property surveyed² and divided into building lots. Oak Avenue (the present Sixty-second Street) in later years bordered the northern part of this territory. On the hill east of Bergenline Avenue was the wooded section belonging to the Dobbs estate and the National Stockyard Company. For many years the name Weehawken Village was often confused with that of Weehawken Township, West New York's southern neighbor, incorporated in 1859. The village grew almost as rapidly as West New York, and might have been called "Little Hibernia" since most of its inhabitants³ came from the Emerald Isle.

About 1865, Patrick O'Connor, schoolmaster in District Number Nine from 1867 to 1870, settled here. In this neighborhood contractor Michael Henry, known as "Red Mike" to distinguish him from his kinsman "Rich Uncle Mike" *under the hill*, carried on successful experiments with asphalt building blocks⁴. Before the turn of the century, a third Michael Henry, nephew of "Red Mike" dubbed "Mickey the Dude", was prominently identified with the political life of the newly incorporated town. Cornelius Healy, another early settler, served on the Union Township Committee for a number of years, and John J. McKeoun⁵ was a member of the Board of Education of District Number Nine.

In the Nineties, "Rastie" Carpenter, later a member of the West New York Town Council, erected Carpenter's Hall on Niles Avenue near the tracks of the Guttenberg steam road. Much to the displeasure of the neighbors, the lads of the village assembled there on Saturday nights to stage boxing matches. House mover William Ganley, "the strong man of West New York", who for a time, before the township had a paid police force was a special officer, also lived in this neighborhood. At the corner of Park Avenue (at that time Bullserry Road) Guthke's Hall served as a dressing room for visiting baseball teams in Monitor Park⁶. To the north of Guthke's, a row of early apartment houses known as "Peters' Flats" are still standing on the west side of Park Avenue. On the rugged hillside to the east were the stately oaks of Monitor Park.

Tower Hill

*Up the long, wide stairway
There's a place that's set apart,
Where one views the distant city
With a quickening of the heart,
Where the golden gleam of sunset
Ends the glory of the day,
And the twinkling lights of Gotham
Beckon evening on its way.*

—MILDRED EICKMANN

AS EARLY as the Civil War, the highest elevation of West New York was known as Tower Hill¹. After the opening of the ferry between Slauch's Meadow and Forty-Second Street, New Yorkers made frequent Sunday excursions to spend the day in the open under the leafy oaks on the crest of the hill. About 1860, an enterprising restaurateur, whose name cannot be ascertained, established a small castle², "Waldschloss zum Bayrischen Himmel" (Bavarian Forest Castle in the Sky) on Tower Hill. Here sojourning Gothamites sat at tables tastefully laden with *al fresco* meals, and to the music of sweet violins, tinkling zithers, and sentimental Alpine yodelings, drank freely of the innkeeper's foaming beer and sparkling wines.

In the vicinity of this castle-restaurant was an open-air observatory which offered, to the east, a delightful bird's-eye view of the city and its environs, and, to the west, a sweeping vista over the lush meadows of the Hackensack River to the Orange Mountains on the far horizon. Tower Hill Avenue, the present Sixty-seventh Street, was named after this lookout.

Before the turn of the century, both castle and lookout were destroyed by fire, but soon after, Tower Hill was to be crowned by real towers—

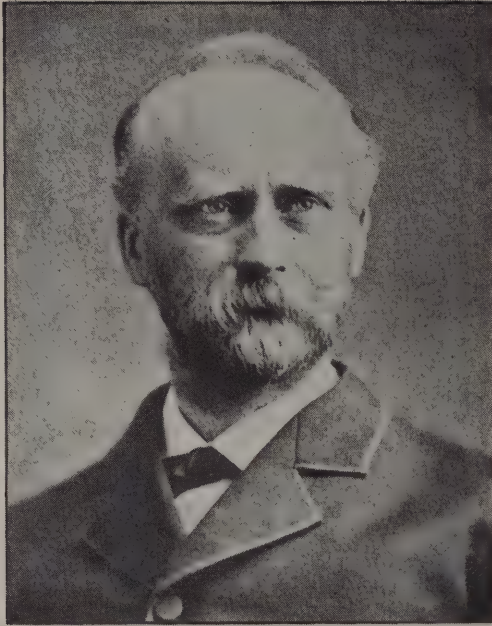


Tower Hill in 1913

the lofty steeple of old St. Mary's and the graceful turret of Edward Gunther's residence. The turret still stands minus the lantern which at one time graced its top. In recent years the steeple has been replaced by the twin Romanesque towers of the new St. Mary's Church, prominent landmarks of the town.

On the southern slope of Tower Hill on Madison Street, was the studio of Andrew Melrose³, prominent landscape artist of the last century. Native of Selkirk, Scotland, he produced many beautiful views of his homeland, notably of Melrose Abbey, Windsor Castle, Hills and Dales of England and The White Cliffs of St. Albans. In the land of his adoption he created with brush and pen, beautiful masterpieces⁴ of the scenic wonders of America. Among the most famous are: Yosemite, the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania, the Berkshires, Lake George, West Point, Old Castle Garden, Brooklyn Bridge, Delaware Water Gap, the Highlands of the Hudson, Mt. Vernon—the Home of Washington, Old Cumberland Gap, and numerous others. Of local interest are his etchings of Schuetzen Park in 1874, old Weehawken Ferry, and his paintings, "New York from the Heights of Jersey", and "Fort Lee on the Hudson".

Melrose, it is believed, never studied under a professional teacher, and therefore must be considered self taught. Although he was not a member of the National Academy of Design, his paintings were often represented in its exhibitions⁵. His etching "Christ is Born" and the painting "Christ before the Three Marys" rank high as works of art⁶. In 1899, when Admiral George Dewey steamed into New York harbor with his victorious white squadron, the artist painted the victory naval parade from the Battery.



Andrew Melrose

In his paintings and sketches Melrose captured and preserved much of the charm of those picturesque days when cattle and goats wandered freely over the rugged countryside which was destined to become West New York. His paintings are characterized by their subtle hues and idyllic foregrounds. From the originals many oleographs were reproduced in England and Germany. These reproductions were enhanced by descriptive poems underneath. The painting, "Evening—The Valley of the Shenandoah", for example, bears this gem of the artist's poetic philosophy:

"And see the rivers how they run
Through woods and meads in shade and sun
Sometimes swift, sometimes slow
Wave succeeding wave, they go
A various journey to the deep
Like human life to endless sleep!"

Like his talented father, George Melrose followed painting as a profession. His work, however, was of a more decorative type, for he became well known as a scenic painter for the old Hippodrome and many other metropolitan theatres. He also beautified the old Town Hall, especially with the clever oil painting of the coat of arms⁷ of the Garden State, directly above the seat of the Township Chairman. Today, it occupies an equally prominent place in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building.

George A. Melrose was one of the organizers of the old Empire Hook and Ladder Company, popularly known as the "Silk Stocking Company."

He also served for many years as President of the Board of Education. In 1900, when he retired from that office, his colleagues presented him with the gavel⁸ he had used throughout his administration.

For many years a huge canvas⁹ twelve feet square, representing Christ being taken from the cross, embellished the Melrose studio. Con-



Melrose Studio

noisseurs claimed that the unsigned masterpiece was over three hundred years old and the work of Viccolo Musso, a follower of Michaelangelo. It was admired by everyone who came to the artist's home. Today, it is in the possession of his grandson, Cuthbert Watson.

Fredonia, daughter of the elder Melrose, married Rev. Dr. William Scott Watson, who for a long time was a missionary in Arabia before he became an interpreter at Ellis Island. A profound scholar of the Semitic languages, Dr. Watson acquired a rare Samaritan codex of the Pentateuch of 686 A. D., with a very interesting cryptogram¹⁰. During his sojourn in Arabia he gathered a remarkable collection of ancient coins¹¹. These archeological treasures he brought with him when he returned to his home in West New York, where for a brief period he preached at old Zion Church, now used by the West New York Assembly.

Upper Dallytown

IN DIRECT CONTRAST with the hilly and wooded areas of the northern part of Union Township, the region south of the present Sixty-first Street presented mainly quarries, quicksands and quagmires. Bergenline Avenue in those days was a rough and unimproved road. On either side were conspicuous ponds and quarry holes, ideal for swimming and skating. It was not difficult to guess that the employment of the men in those days was block cutting. In fact, the unofficial name of the growing municipality was Bluestone City. To the west of Bergenline Avenue was the great Dallytown Swamp which extended southward to old Hudson County Park.

In winter when the quarries were idle, the surface of these ponds yielded an abundance of ice. This was cut and stored for use in the city.



"Schmidt's Pond"

On the Hudson Boulevard, separated from each other by a dike, were the large ponds of William H. Schmidt and Hermann Meckert, known as

Schmidt's Pond" and "Meckert's Pond". In 1884, Union Township had sixteen ice houses¹. Albert Littlefield, John A. Ross, Wehnke, and Files were also engaged in this business.

In 1871, a petition² was drawn up for the improvement of Bergenline Avenue—a mere cowpath in those days. It called for a thoroughfare which was to have the substantial width of eighty feet and showed the progressive foresight of the early settlers in establishing an easy and direct communication link with Bergen County. By this action the foundation of the town's chief business center was laid. West New York was to have a wide avenue of trade, for the "old 'Liners" were not content with the facilities of the narrow business street of their southern neighbor.

In the Seventies, cross streets were unknown below Niles and Pierce Avenues. On the east side of the Avenue was Klotz Lane³ (Fifty-fourth Street), a mere dirt road accommodating the residents, D. J. Rooney and J. Riehl. Access to Bullserry Road was a matter of walking around the quarry pits and across the fields along well trodden footpaths. On the west, Harold Avenue (the present Fifty-seventh Street) ran in for a few hundred feet. Farnam Avenue (Fifty-fourth Street) extended through the Van Ostrand Lands almost to the home of William Cox, a florist on the Hudson Boulevard. A short distance to the south of this, an unnamed alley, later known as Arthur Place⁴, after making a sharp turn to the south, reached the Boulevard at the Van Cleef residence. This provided access to a row of modest dwellings. In the southern Dallytown section lived George Allen and Louis Sargent, the florist.

Hudson County Park

OLD HUDSON COUNTY PARK was in the southern extremity of the Dallytown section in the vicinity of the Public Service building. Its hotel¹ was used for public gatherings, picnics, and meetings of the early Township Committee before West New York's old Town Hall was built. Residents from Union Hill also frequented the place. In 1876, Union Township held its National Centennial Celebration² there. At ceremonies which followed a colorful parade, Frederick Frambach, Junior read the Declaration of Independence, and Anthony Ryder, in typical Fourth of July spirit, delivered an oration which reviewed the progress made in the nation, state, and township.

In the Nineties, the notorious "Knuckle Dusters" came over from New York to engage in comic target competitions³. Mounted on horses, which were ridiculously arrayed in trailing skirts and pantaloons, these hoodlums "took over" the park for the day. Their burlesque archery equipment consisted of brace and bit with which they approached the target blind-folded and proceeded to bore through it, much as a younger generation "pinned the tail on the donkey". As was to be expected of such a gang of toughs, serious disagreements arose during the "contest". These provided an excellent opportunity for an exhibition of the gang's pugilistic prowess, much to the consternation of the peaceloving residents of old Dallytown. A general alarm was sent in to the old Town Hall, and the undesirables were promptly driven out by the volunteer fire-fighters.

The metropolitan "Knuckle Dusters" were not the only outlaw element to visit Dallytown. Another band, the "Growler Gang"⁴, put in more frequent appearances. Their chief diversion was "rushing the growler"⁵, and the law-abiding pedestrian who was greeted at twilight with the familiar question: "Ave you the siven?" (Seven cents was the price of a growler of beer in those days!) reluctantly complied. A refusal would have resulted in a severe beating. Through the efforts of Recorder Thourot, uncle of Union City's Mayor Harry Thourot, these panhandlers were finally pusted.

Dallytown Tallyho

*Commuter—one who spends his life
In riding to and from his wife;
A man who shaves and takes a train,
And then rides back to shave again.*

—E. B. WHITE

THE STORY of North Hudson's first venture in public transportation goes back to the Civil War era. In those days the pioneer woodcutters, quarrymen, and farmers in the scattered hamlets did not have the commuting problems of the thousands who go to New York to earn their living today.

In the middle of the last century William Dally¹, a woodcutter in the old Fulton Street section of Union Hill, drove the first hack from that locality to the Hoboken Ferry. Dallytown was the name of the little settlement which sprang up in the clearing which surrounded his sawmill. The rutty forest road which wound off towards the north was known as Dallytown Road until late in the last century, when Hudson County Boulevard, North Hudson's busy transportation link with Journal Square, was constructed along the route of this old woodland road. Even today, the southern part of West New York extending to the Boulevard is still referred to by old-timers as Dallytown.

In 1854, Dally's primitive service was followed by the stage lines of Nicholas Goelz and Peter Mechler, which ran from the present site of the Hudson Trust Company at Bergenline Avenue and the Hackensack Plank Road. These improved vehicles with their artistically ornate external panels followed the route of the old Plank Road to Hoboken. In 1859, Goelz and Mechler organized the Hoboken and Weehawken Horse Railroad Company² with the financial backing of John Hillric Bonn, Jacob Schweitzer, Charles Spielmann, and William Hexamer, prominent business men of the day.

In March, 1865, this pioneer company, having acquired other lines in Jersey City and Hoboken, became known as the North Hudson County Railway Company. Under the presidency of John Hillric Bonn the traction company became one of the most powerful in the state. Bobtail cars with open rear platforms drawn by powerful horses over smooth tracks were the order of the day—a very pleasant contrast to the primitive facilities of the old stages in which passengers “aviated” while vehicles lumbered and rattled over the corrugated roads.

Horse car service to Guttenberg was begun by this company from Union Street and Bergenline Avenue, proceeding on narrow gauge tracks through what is now West New York to Herman Avenue (Seventieth Street), Guttenberg. Here the tracks turned eastward to the Bullserry Road terminal at Anton Meckert’s Hotel. The old Guttenberg Post Office³ which served the upper part of North Hudson until the middle of the “Gay Nineties” was located at the terminal. Here, an iron turntable was used to reverse the car for its southward trip to Union Street.

Service between Union Hill and Guttenberg was maintained on a half-hourly basis. During January, 1875, the snowfall⁴ was so heavy that sleds had to be substituted for the cars. In the same month, twenty adventurous youths crossed over the ice floes of the Hudson⁵ from old



First Bergenline Trolley

"Tankville" to Forty-second Street, while the "Midland" was caught in the ice.

With the opening of the Guttenberg Race Track in 1885 the route on Bergenline Avenue was extended northward past "Pat" Sullivan's Saloon at the entrance of the track, to Nungessers. Larger cars were needed to accommodate the racing fans, and "double enders" replaced the "bobtails".

Horse car service continued along Bergenline Avenue until 1894, when the first "four wheeler" electric trolleys made their debut on double tracks of wider gauge as far as Niles Avenue. Service from that point was continued on the old narrow gauge tracks with horse cars to Guttenberg, much to the dissatisfaction of the residents on Tower Hill. An active campaign for better service was begun by these irate citizens. Ord Darling, at that time Chairman of Union Township, led the successful crusade⁶ which brought about the electrification of the upper part of the line.

Meanwhile, events of great importance in the field of transportation were taking place in the eastern part of the town with the advent of the Guttenberg steam road in April, 1892. Built primarily to accommodate the patrons of Eldorado and the old race track, the rolling stock⁷ of this line consisted of four "end-tank steam motors" built by the H. K. Porter Company of Pittsburgh, and two Baldwin "dummy" engines, formerly used on the Hoboken elevated road. These puffing "moguls" supplied the motive power for a fleet of twenty passenger cars, built by the Gilbert Car Company, similar to those once used on the steam powered "El" lines in New York.

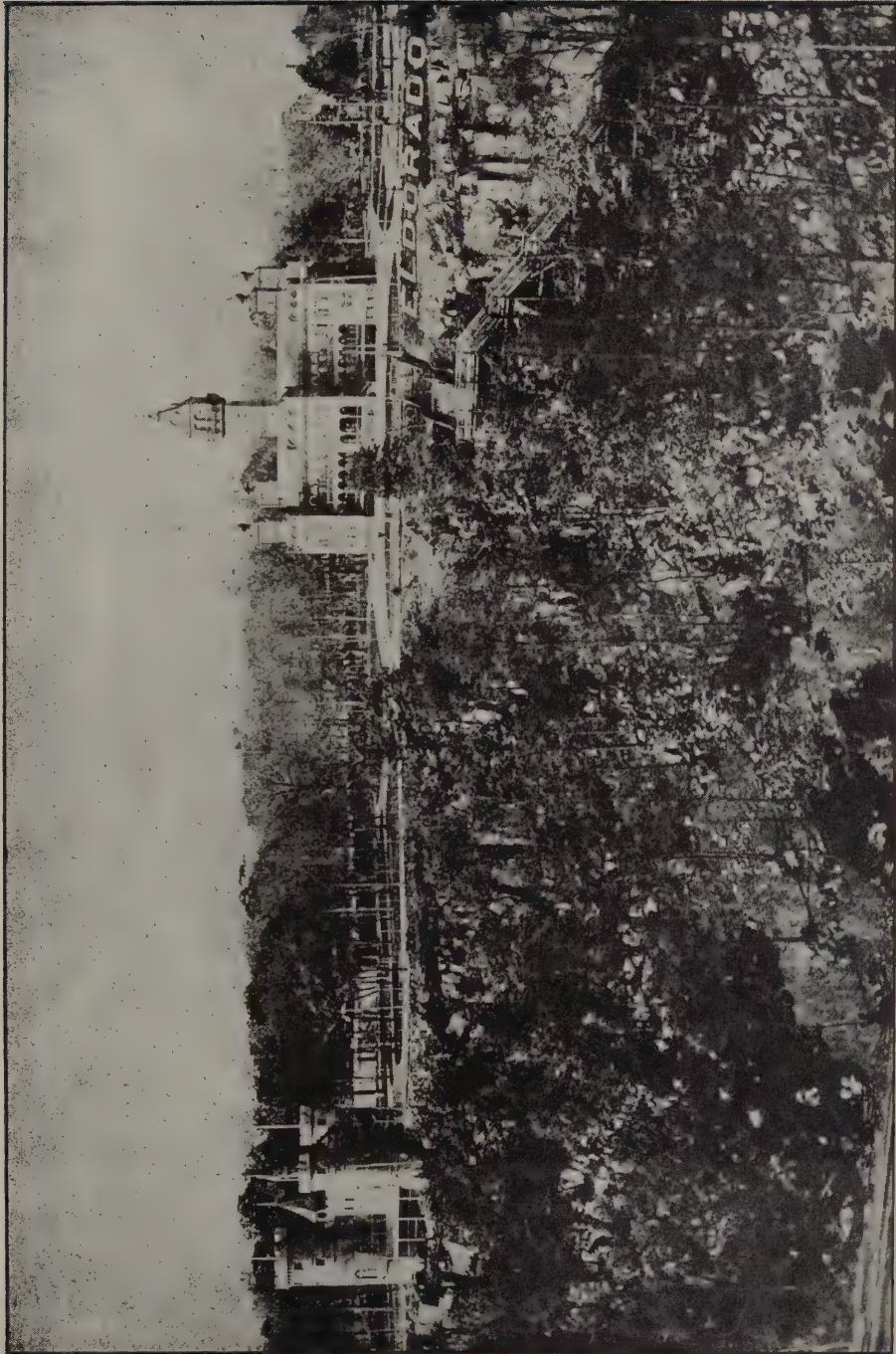
The southern terminal of the line was at the end of a great viaduct 148 feet above the trolley loop at the West Shore Ferry. A huge iron trestle 873 feet long provided a level roadbed for the trains to reach the top of the Palisades. Three hydraulic Otis Elevators, each accommodating 130 persons, whisked their human freight to the station above in forty-five seconds. Built into the roof of the station was an enormous tank, 194 feet above the ground, to supply the hydraulic energy which operated the elevators. At this aerial terminal, commanding a magnificent view of

the Hudson and New York, passengers boarded trains destined for the Eldorado and the Guttenberg Track. The station and viaduct, designed by Thomas E. Brown, architect of the Eiffel Tower⁸ in Paris, was built at a cost of \$850,000. When one weighs this capital outlay against the four years of actual service rendered to the traveling public, it is readily understood why this colossus was referred to as "Bonn's folly"⁹.



Eldorado Viaduct

When the 1948 commuter waiting for a bus at West Shore Terminal gazes at the great concrete arch under the Boulevard at Liberty Place just above the steps leading to Hamilton Plaza, he may well wonder why it was placed there. In the early Nineties, the opening it now spans was an artificial canyon which still runs under the subcellars of the Gladdon Hall Apartments, a place frequented from time to time by adventure-seeking youths. At this point the tracks of the old steam line reached *terra firma* on the lofty rock of the Palisades at Eldorado Station.



Eldorado on the Palisades

Eldorado

*Gaily bedight
A gallant knight
In sunshine and in shadow
Had journeyed long
Singing a song
In search of Eldorado.*

—EDGAR ALLAN POE

ELDORADO! What pleasant memories this name recalls to old timers of New York and Hudson County! To them, the mention of this magic word does not mean that legendary South American city of fabulous wealth so diligently sought centuries ago by Sir Walter Raleigh. Nor does it recall that Eldorado, known to the "Forty-Niners" in those epoch-making days of the California gold rush, but rather a picturesque resort of pleasant recreation, high atop the Palisades overlooking what is now the mid-Manhattan theatre district.

Herman Walker, former Mayor of Guttenberg; Henry J. Gordon, pharmacist; Hillric J. Bonn, son of the first president of the North Hudson County Railway Company; James H. Symes, prominent West New York committeeman and lumber dealer, and Louis Emmerich were among the progressive North Hudson citizens who incorporated the Palisades Amusement and Exhibition Company. This organization presented huge spectacles in the vast Eldorado amphitheatre, which seated more than 8,000 people. This great structure, built by Ferdinand Mueller of West New York, had a stage 325 feet in length and 150 feet in depth, large enough to accommodate a thousand performers at one time.

On this stage, Balossy and Imra Kiralfi, celebrated Bohemian performers from Niblo's Garden on Broadway, produced their brilliant and spectacular "King Solomon and the Destruction of Jerusalem". In 1892, Augusto Francioli, ably assisted by his brother Romeo, presented his

magnificent "Egypt through Centuries". Augusto personally trained his ballet dancers, who often appeared in troupes of 1,500 in a single scene. In this role he exercised great patience, counting rhythmically as they rehearsed: "Wonna, dua, dria. Dua lika mia!"¹

In "Egypt through Centuries" the finest theatrical talent was combined with the most effective technique of the day. Frieda von Moltke, niece of the famous Prussian general, starred in the leading role of Cleopatra. Camels, horses, donkeys and elephants provided realistic scenes and glamorous processions.



Eldorado Amphitheatre

In the grand finale, "The Bombardment of Alexandria", the action is brought to a sweeping climax. Entrenched Arabs fight it out with the gunners aboard Admiral Seymour's flagship, while European and Egyptian crowds flee in all directions. Cavalrymen gallop about the enormous stage. Fires break out in various parts of the city. The beat-

ing of drums and the blaring of trumpets mingle with the thunder of cannon and the cracking of muskets. Finally, the English tars effect a landing and storm the positions of the fanatical Arabs who take to their heels amid the smoke and fire which cover the city. The spectacle ends with the Viceroy of Egypt and Admiral Seymour standing triumphant amid Alexandria's smoking ruins, while the rebel Chief Arabi-Pasha kneels in chains before them with his fanatical followers dead about him.—Such was the entertainment offered in the open air on the heights of Weehawken!

George Melrose of Tower Hill painted the scenery for these productions, and Ord Darling², then Chairman of Union Township, was chief constable at the resort.

Eldorado Casino was a large turreted building in Moorish architecture sprawling atop the Palisades. From its east towers, visitors could view a sweeping panorama of the Hudson and the busy metropolis with Brooklyn, the dormitory of Manhattan, in the background. On clear days the Statue of Liberty, Staten Island, the Narrows, and even Lower New York Bay could be seen.

At night, this charming resort beckoned to New Yorkers with its myriads of twinkling lights, which clearly outlined all the walks of the tastefully landscaped grounds. Here Nahan Franko, friend of Victor Herbert, conducted a band which gave daily concerts. In the last year of Eldorado's existence that great composer-conductor³ himself was featured with "Pat" Gilmore's band. He dedicated his "Eldorado March" to this resort. Jules Levy, cornet soloist, often played an intricate cadenza in the distance and received the echo from the band in its pavilion.

Other features of the old park included a beautiful fountain with nymphs and satyrs. Its waters sparkled brilliantly in the sunlight, reflected by countless prisms in the over-hanging arches of the walks. Even at night, when illuminated by many colored lights, this fountain gleamed with singular beauty. Perched at the edge of the precipitous cliff stood an attractive Rhenish castle where visitors ate and drank while they enjoyed the beautiful view of the majestic Hudson and the growing city. This

castle in later years became the property of Karl Bitter⁴, the famous Weehawken sculptor, who erected a fine studio to the north of it. Today, castle and studio have vanished, as also the handsome residence of George Meister (father of Mayor John Meister of Weehawken) at the south, to make room for Hamilton Plaza.



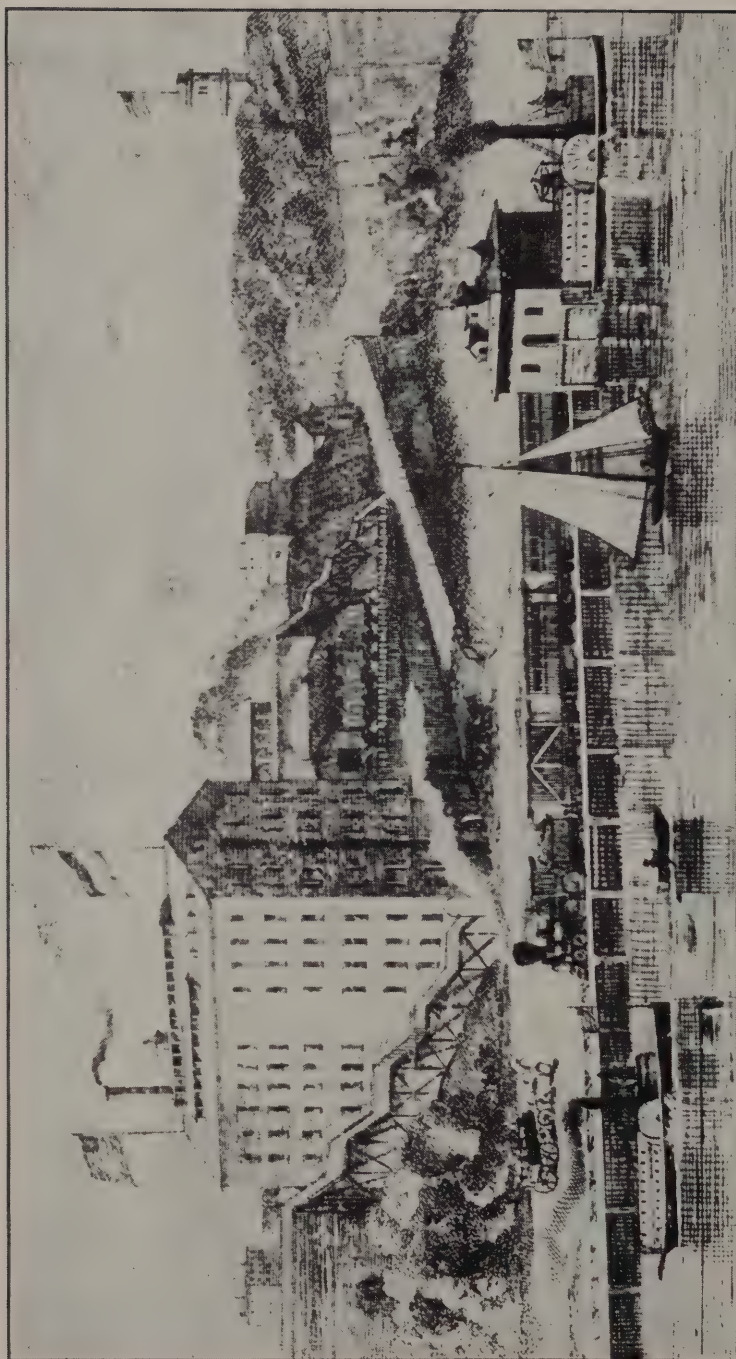
Eldorado Casino and Fountain

In the quiet early hours of a brisk November morning⁵ in 1898, beautiful Eldorado Casino flared up in a fiery mass of molten gold which illuminated the Hudson and the region round about for over a mile. The conflagration was far too great for the crude fire-fighting equipment of those days. The well-seasoned timber of the old structure crumbled beneath the consuming flames. Its stately towers crashed into the raging inferno. This gorgeous spectacle, terrific in its grandeur, closed the final act at Eldorado.

Today, the lands of the old park, which included the area between Liberty Place and Duer Place from the cliff to Park Avenue, are covered with residential buildings.

* * * * *

From Eldorado, the little steam train⁶ continued along Liberty Place and puffed northward through old Union Township past quarry holes, ponds, and the colorful gypsy encampment at Monitor Park⁷. Northward the train chugged past the old White House Tavern at present Sixty-fifth Street and Dewey Avenue. Then, turning sharply to the right, the diminutive "Limited" entered Guttenberg's Second Street, today's Broadway. After stopping at Herman Avenue Station it proceeded to "Pat" Sullivan's Hotel on Bergenline Avenue, the northern terminal and entrance to the old race track.



Old White Brewery in 1862

“They’re Off at the ‘Gut’!”

*In rain or in sunshine, in fog or in snow,
The Guttenberg coursers are “rarin’ to go.”
The jockeys and jades stage some startling upsets,
But Blitzen’s the plug that “pays off on the bets.”*

—W. T. E.

IN OUR great country are two Guttenbergs: one, a peaceful village on the western bank of the “Father of Waters” in Clayton County, Iowa; the other, high above the tidewater of the Hudson, famous in the mid-Eighties and the Gay Nineties for a trotting track and for its production of that foamy nectar of Gambrinus so dear to the palates of New Yorkers and Jerseyites alike. Although Guttenberg, New Jersey, in those romantic days was a town of less than a thousand souls, it could boast of no less than two breweries: Koehler’s (later Distler’s) White Brewery, a landmark visible for miles along the river, and Anton Meckert’s, today a storage warehouse on Park Avenue. It cannot be proved that the founders of Guttenberg on the Mississippi and the Weehawken Land and Ferry Association in 1853 had an equal claim to Johann Gutenberg, father of modern printing and book-making in the fifteenth century, as their common patron. It is, indeed, a well known fact that in 1885, when the old “Gut” track was opened to the turf fans of Gotham, it was the rendezvous of the Manhattan “bookies”! To do justice to the good, progressive neighbors on the north, a serious geographical error must be corrected here. Although the “Gut” was situated, not in Guttenberg, but in the unpopulated section of North Bergen south of old Nungesser’s Hotel, the unrestrained turf enthusiasts from New York persisted in calling the original half-mile course the “Gut”, because Guttenberg happened to be the nearest inhabited region to the south.

The original site of the half-mile track was acquired by the North Hudson Driving Park Association for the harmless purpose of establishing

a course "where the horsemen of the city might have friendly trials of speed and to encourage in a general way an interest in trotting"¹. The heavy investment in this amateur enterprise almost ended in bankruptcy, when John C. Carr, New York pharmacist and professional horseracing promoter, seized the opportunity to "invade" Jersey. He changed the trotting course to a genuine race track, replacing the one at Brighton which but recently had been closed under Empire State law. Together with Gotfried Walbaum, alias "Dutch Fred", John M. Crusius, and County



Entrance to the Guttenberg track in 1892

Clerk Dennis McLoughlin, he organized the board of directors of the Hudson County Jockey Club, known as "The Big Four". From that day forward, Guttenberg attained national prominence; hostelrys along Bergenline Avenue and Bullserry Road in West New York also reaped their profits from the transient Gothamites *en route* to the track. The term "Guttenboig plug" for the miserable hacks entered in the races, and the announcement, "They're off at the 'Gut'!" became current slang expressions of that period.

Races were held under all possible atmospheric conditions, and

elaborate telegraph facilities (which were often tapped!) linked the "Gut" with the pool rooms of Manhattan. From New York, "Pete" De Lacy², "Mike" Murray and "Slang" Draper tried to "cut in" on the business of "The Big Four". For a time De Lacy even set himself up at the Octagon Hotel³ in Fort Lee where he covered, not only Guttenberg, but the Jerome track in the Bronx as well.

Soon the demands of the patrons brought about the enlargement of the course to full mile size. According to Carr⁴, the track, together with the approach from the ferry, was opened for business within three days after the *great* Blizzard of 1888 with the aid of eight hundred laborers from the city, where transportation was still bogged down under a heavy blanket of snow! Fog, mud, rain or sleet could not keep those faithful Guttenberg coursers from their daily appointed task of running six races to "bring home the bacon"! Legend has it that Blitzen, "The Iron Horse", outstripped them all. This "Winged Horse" of the Jersey hinterland, by far more agile than the celebrated "Gunpowder" of Ichabod Crane in Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow", glibly overcame all obstacles, even fog! Readily adjusting himself to the constantly changing track conditions, he could not only run, but swim, skate, wade in mud, and glide through the snow like St. Nick's own "Blitzen"! In a fog or blinding snowstorm⁵ a clever jockey, a few yards from the start, would promptly shunt him off the track diagonally across the field. By this strategy, the old hack, like Aesop's tortoise, would reach the goal ahead of all rivals, amidst the shouts of the assembled rooters, "Blitzen wins by a lip!"

In the last years of the track beautiful thoroughbreds appeared at the "Gut", particularly in the final race in September, 1893, when a record-breaking throng came over to see the exciting contest between "Tammany" and "Lamplighter". Promoter Carr bet heavily on the former and came in just in time from the Chicago World's Fair to see him win.

Since the crowd of New Yorkers who patronized the track were not of the best element, police supervision was sorely needed. On one occasion Chairman Ord Darling⁶ of Union Township, serving as Police Sergeant at the "Gut", saved the life of Constable Michael Buckley while he was attempting to arrest a notorious bandit and desperado.

In 1893, the golden era of the turf came to a close when racing was abruptly legislated into oblivion⁷. Shortly thereafter a poetic parody on E. L. Thayer's "Casey at the Bat", appeared in the columns of *The Observer*. We shall call it "The 'Bookie's' Lament":

"Oh somewhere in this land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy here for the poolseller; his pull is about played out."

In later years the track was used for midget auto and motorcycle races, and for a time during the summer months large encampments of gypsies were frequently to be found there. The old stables sheltered the horses and wagons which made up the gypsy caravans. In the early part of the present century, "Little Coney Island"⁸, located in northern Hudson County Park opposite the track, attracted crowds from the city and surrounding districts of Hudson and Bergen counties.

In September, 1919, the vast area of the old track was cut up into building lots to be sold at public auction. The late Joseph P. Day, New



Nungesser's Hotel

York's well-known auctioneer, was on hand to sell 1,000 lots within five hours to a throng of prospective customers who came in "flivvers", buggies, limousines, and dilapidated peddler wagons to purchase plots for future home sites.

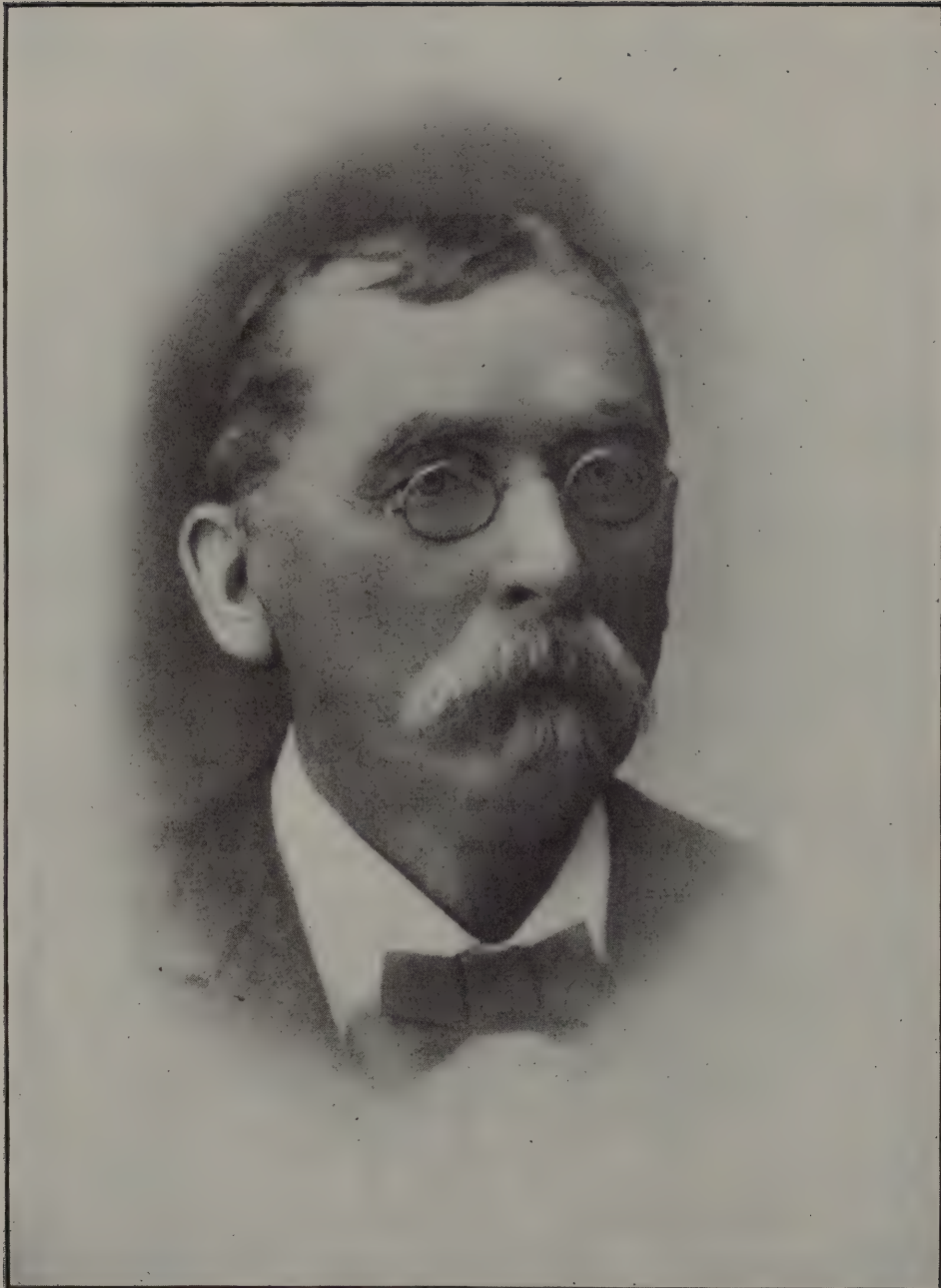


"Little Coney Island"

*The Observer*⁹ gave a graphic account of the proceedings: "The big crowd gathered under the candy-striped circus tent and forgot the heat as they laughed at the antics of the Billy Sunday of the real estate world. Offering choice corner sites for 'saloons, peanut, popcorn and soda water privileges', and ordering low bidders to be 'shot at sunrise', the auctioneer jumped about, hopped up and down, and constantly 'dry shampooed' his sparse, slightly grayed hair, while his score of clerks hustled about the big crowd, recording bids and urging buyers to increase bids.

"Towards the end of the sale the auctioneer lay flat on his back on his platform and indulged in a few calisthenics, while the crowd stood about and gasped apprehensively. But the clerks, who had watched the pantomime before, continued their activities."

Today, the race track section is one of the finest residential communities in North Hudson.



William H. Schmidt

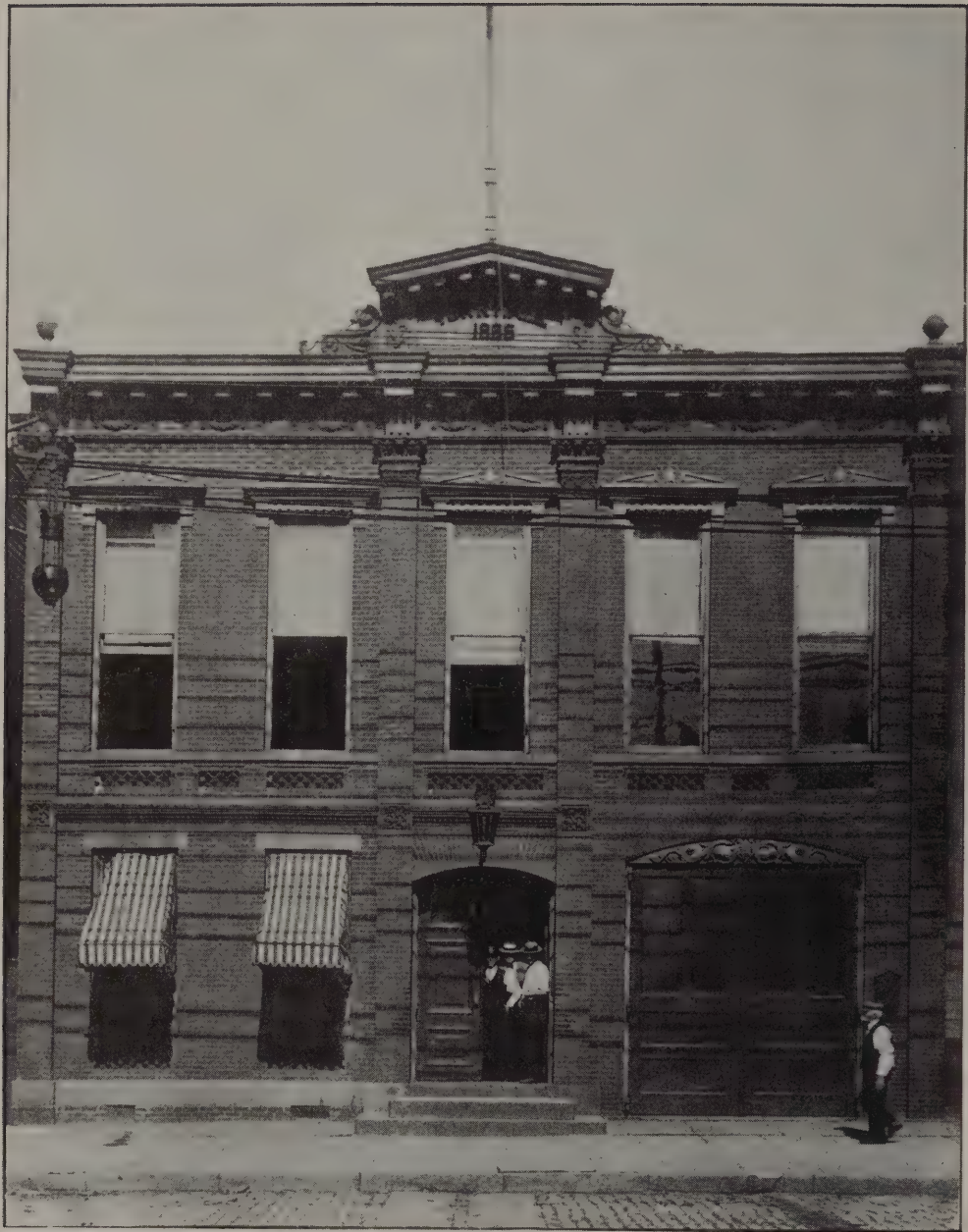
Early Government

IN THE WAKE of improved transportation facilities followed a natural increase in North Hudson's population, particularly in the scattered communities of Union Township. This called for a concentrated administration of public affairs. In the Fifties, when all North Hudson was still included in the greater Township of North Bergen, tax collection had been by no means a simple matter. On specified days John Sturges, the peripatetic publican, had to sit in widely scattered localities, ranging from West Hoboken and New Durham to Bull's Ferry to gather in the township revenue.

On February 28, 1861, the independent spirit of the growing settlements brought about legislation¹ which made West Hoboken and Union Township separate municipal units. In 1864, the Town of Union (Union Hill) withdrew from the latter, leaving the present area of West New York and Guttenberg as Union Township.

Although the second section of the Act of 1861 gave Union Township its name², the origin of the designation is not disclosed. There are, however, two possible explanations: the fact that the area consisted of a union of scattered settlements, or, perhaps more plausibly, the fact that our country at that time was engaged in a struggle to preserve the great *Union* of the States.

The earliest governing body of the remaining township was a committee, consisting of three members, chosen for a term of one year in the annual spring election. These officials for a time were all residents of Guttenberg. The first local (West New York) committee³ meeting was held on April 15, 1878, twenty years before the incorporation of the Town of West New York. The first Chairman of Union Township was William H. Schmidt⁴, who held that responsible office for over twelve years. His fellow committeemen were Cornelius Healy and Charles Wurtz,



Old Town Hall

Junior. In 1884, Chairman (Mayor) Schmidt still served on the governing body with Michael Furlong and Garret Fink.

Early in 1879, the following petition⁵, signed by a large number of citizens, was forwarded to the Legislature at Trenton:

“To the Honorable the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, Gentlemen:

“The undersigned citizens, freeholders and taxpayers of the Township of Union, in the County of Hudson, would most respectfully request the passage by your Honorable body, of Assembly Bill, No. 193, entitled: *An act to set off the incorporate town of Guttenberg from the Township of Union, in the County of Hudson*, and as a measure of justice and protection and for various other good and valid causes your petitioners ask for the speedy passage of the bill referred to, and for which your petitioners will in duty bound ever pray.” The bill was promptly passed by the Legislature.

On March 20, 1879, at a meeting⁶ of a joint committee held at the Hudson County Park House, Union Township was represented by Chairman William H. Schmidt, Committeemen Cornelius Healy and Charles Wurtz, Junior, while Herman Walker⁷ represented Guttenberg and acted as clerk at this meeting. After adjusting and determining the separate assets of Guttenberg and Union Township, the committee submitted on March 31, 1879, a report of their proceedings to the citizens.

After 1879, Union Township functioned as an independent municipality. Its name, Union Township, was not popular among the residents because it was too frequently confused with that of the adjoining Town of Union. The more descriptive designations Bluestone City and West New York were in common use, particularly the latter, which after twenty years became the official name of the incorporated town.

In 1885, the first Town Hall⁸ was built on the site formerly occupied by old Schaiders' Hotel on Bergenline Avenue, south of the present Sixty-first Street. The building, a substantial brick structure, also housed the equipment of the Empire Hook and Ladder Company. It served West New York until 1915, when the present stately Municipal Building was dedicated.

Turf Fire and Cyclone

IN 1895, the township experienced two most unusual events. On the railroad acreage in the vicinity of today's Broadway to the south of Fifty-ninth Street, a raging turf fire broke out in July and was still burning in October. No effort was made to extinguish it, for no one knew how. Even the summer rains seemed to have no effect upon it, and the authorities hoped that it would eventually burn itself out before the arrival of the winter's frost and snow. An area of about half an acre burned down to an estimated depth of eighteen feet¹, to the quicksand bed which still lies deep under West New York's playground behind Memorial High School.

In the Twenties this region was commonly called the West New York "sinker" and "Dieckmann's Swamp". Stories of wandering cattle and goats disappearing here in the early days are legion. Tons upon tons of rock and building debris were deposited here to fill in the apparently bottomless cavern. When the roadbed for Broadway was laid, piles were driven to depths of over twenty-five feet to keep that street from disappearing.

When the troops of "Light Horse Harry Lee"² on their expedition against Paulus Hook floundered through this marshy region, it was the bed of the Awiehaken Creek³ which from the marshland of Guttenberg flowed through this Broadway section to Union Hill. From there it wound its way eastward and leaped and rippled down through the valley to Weehawken Cove below King's Bluff near the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. Here, before the Revolution, Nicholas Bayard had dammed up its waters to run his grist mill. Old-timers still recall a series of ponds along the course of this stream⁴. No one can predict whether its bed can ever provide a solid base for permanent buildings.

* * * * *

In September, 1895, North Hudson felt the impact of a most unusual windstorm, which, according to reports⁵, caused the greatest havoc in Union Township. In Monitor Park about forty large trees were completely

uprooted. Telegraph poles along Bullserry Road were thrown to the ground, and along Bergenline Avenue wires were severed in many places.

While the storm was at its height, the driver of a wagon miraculously escaped death when a falling tree struck the rear of the vehicle in which he was returning from New York. In the western part of the town William H. Schmidt's four ice houses were totally demolished. It was rumored that one of his employees had been buried under the debris. An emergency alarm was turned in at headquarters. The fire fighters responded quickly, but fortunately the man was in a safe spot, and unharmed.

Many homes and business establishments were completely destroyed, notably Wehnke's ice houses on Bullserry Road, Mansmann's dancing pavilion on Niles Avenue, John Diehl's stables, and Contractor Pohley's new home. Many chimneys were also knocked over.

Not even township property was spared by the fury of the storm. On the Town Hall the skylight was demolished, and the old quarters of the Hickory Engine Company, then occupied by the Palisade Athletic Club, was blown from its moorings and landed in a neighboring pool of water. A house which was being moved along the Bullserry Road was lodged in a quarry hole.

On the crest of Tower Hill, the new frame edifice of St. Mary's Church, for many years a prominent landmark, was nearing completion. Father Berghold had drawn the plans and for several months had superintended its construction. The roaring wind struck the building with such force that it was blown more than two feet out of plumb, and the cupola which surmounted its eighty-five foot steeple slanted sadly towards the north. In an incredibly short time, however, Contractor Bowe righted the structure and it was dedicated on October 27, 1895.

Taurus Post Office

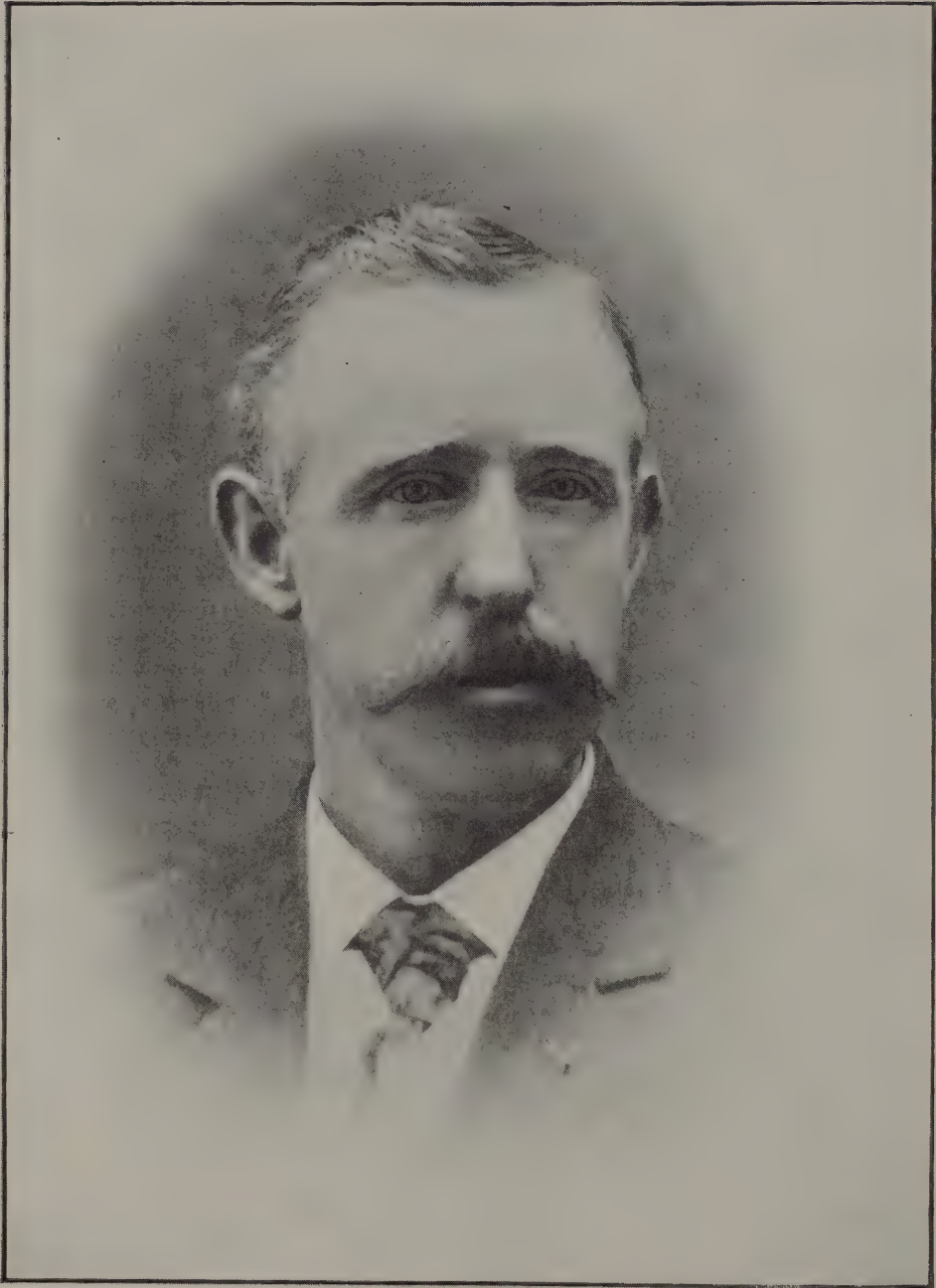
IN THE SPRING of 1896, a large group of enthusiastic citizens assembled at the Town Hall in response to a call from several prominent leaders. The purpose of this meeting was to secure a local post office. Since 1874, the residents had been served by the old Guttenberg Post Office on Bulls-ferry Road, and deliveries were often delayed for as long as a week. Although agitation for a post office had been going on for some time, the plans never took definite shape. To complicate matters still further, the postal designation Guttenberg, New Jersey also included Union Township, unofficially known as West New York.

Ex-Mayor Ord Darling presided over the meeting and called upon Captain James H. Symes to give an account of his efforts regarding the new project. Captain Symes, who conducted a large lumber business in the township, commented on the many names which were applied locally, stating that they tended to confuse out-of-town businessmen. Often letters would be sent and never received. Whenever the name West New York was mentioned, Symes would be confronted with the question, "Where is that place?", or with the emphatic assertion of a local wag, "There's Guttenboig and North Boigen, but West New York ain't on the map!" To remedy this perplexing state of affairs and to promote local interests, Symes had undertaken the thankless task of circulating a petition and making two trips to Washington at his own expense. There he had entrusted the matter to Senator Sewell and A. A. Hardenberg, the local Representative in Congress. He expressed the conviction that, if the residents were earnest and concerted in their efforts, their plans would meet with success.

Former Mayor William H. Schmidt, who had previously gone to Washington in behalf of this project, made a short speech filled with glorious prophesies of West New York's future greatness. After calling for sincere co-operation in promoting the cause he introduced Supervising

Principal William Van Sickle, who outlined the advantages of a home post office for the growing community. Thereupon, Mr. Van Sickle presented a petition which was adopted on the motion of Mr. Schmidt. All of the seventy-five citizens present signed the document, and Mr. Schmidt and Captain Symes volunteered to take it to Washington.

As a result of this meeting West New York's postal dilemma was overcome, but the new office was established under the name "Taurus Post Office"!¹ On May 6, 1896, Justice of the Peace Alphonse Thourot was officially notified of his appointment as postmaster. Since those days, branches and sub-stations have been added to satisfy the demands of a growing municipality. Today, the modern edifice² on Bergenline Avenue handles West New York's great volume of mail and parcel post under the official name of the town.



John E. Otis

From Union to Unity

AT SEVEN O'CLOCK on the evening of March 2, 1898, the telephone¹ rang persistently in the old Town Hall. Somebody was in a great hurry to contact Mayor Otis. To reach "Mayor John" from headquarters was a simple matter, for his hardware store² conveniently adjoined the hall to the north. The Mayor rushed to the phone, for he had been anxiously expecting a long distance call.

"Hello, is that you, Mayor?" asked an excited voice.

"Yes, hello, who is this?"

"This is Bauer, Assemblyman Bauer. Say, the Governor has just signed the West New York Incorporation Bill!"

"Thanks! Goodbye," was the laconic reply of the delighted executive, and with a loud click the receiver dropped back on its hook.

Quickly he bounded down the stairs and ran to the tower in the rear of the building. The old bell³ pealed loudly three times. The keynote of incorporation echoed in the quiet evening air. The hour of triumph had struck! Great things were to happen in West New York!

To Mayor Otis this was a moment of great exultation. Only the week before, he had gone to Trenton with Town Clerk Francis Tonn and former Mayor William H. Schmidt. Together with these officials he had conducted a vigorous fight for the passage of the Incorporation Bill in the face of the opposition of a powerful New York Central lobby⁴. The campaign proved successful and the bill's passage by the Assembly was assured. The Central, which in the previous decade had crushed the West Shore rival, was powerless against the iron will of these three men! With the support of Senator Daly and Assemblyman Bauer, these three won the battle against the "Napoleons of Finance," who fought desperately to protect their interests above and below the cliff.

The next sixty days were filled with activity in West New York, for the important issue had to be submitted to the voters in the form of a referendum. At a special election⁵ held on July 5, an overwhelming majority approved the action of their courageous leaders.

There remained the simple formality of filing the election certificate and the accompanying records with the Secretary of State within three days, as provided by law. This requirement was promptly fulfilled and on July 8, 1898, the Township of Union officially became the incorporated Town of West New York.

For his resolute action John E. Otis may well be considered "Father of Greater West New York." Like Andrew Haswell Green, "Father of Greater New York," he succeeded in consolidating loosely federated elements and welding them into a unified community. He built a sound foundation for the future development of the town. Green, the former Park Commissioner, began his campaign for "Greater New York" in 1868, and attained his objective after thirty years of patient plodding. In this anniversary year of 1948, West New York proudly greets her big sister across the Hudson on her Golden Jubilee.

Charter Day

*"The Township of Union has outlived its purpose.
I now christen you the Town of West New York."*

—MATILDA BRILL

THE ABOVE WORDS were the keynote to the gala celebration of Saturday, August 27, 1898. On that red letter day the joyful citizenry of West New York celebrated the official recognition of a time-honored name. The jubilant throng bore witness to the fact that the will of the majority could not be thwarted by the power of the privileged few. The observance was a triumphant demonstration of democracy in action, the spontaneous expression of the will of a free people.

All day long, preparations¹ had been going on throughout the town for the big event of the evening. By nightfall every home along the line of march was decorated by its owner. Old Glory was prominently displayed everywhere, and hundreds of lanterns illuminated the stars and stripes at night.

A new-born weekly newspaper² in its second edition featured the following comprehensive eyewitness account of the colorful procession:

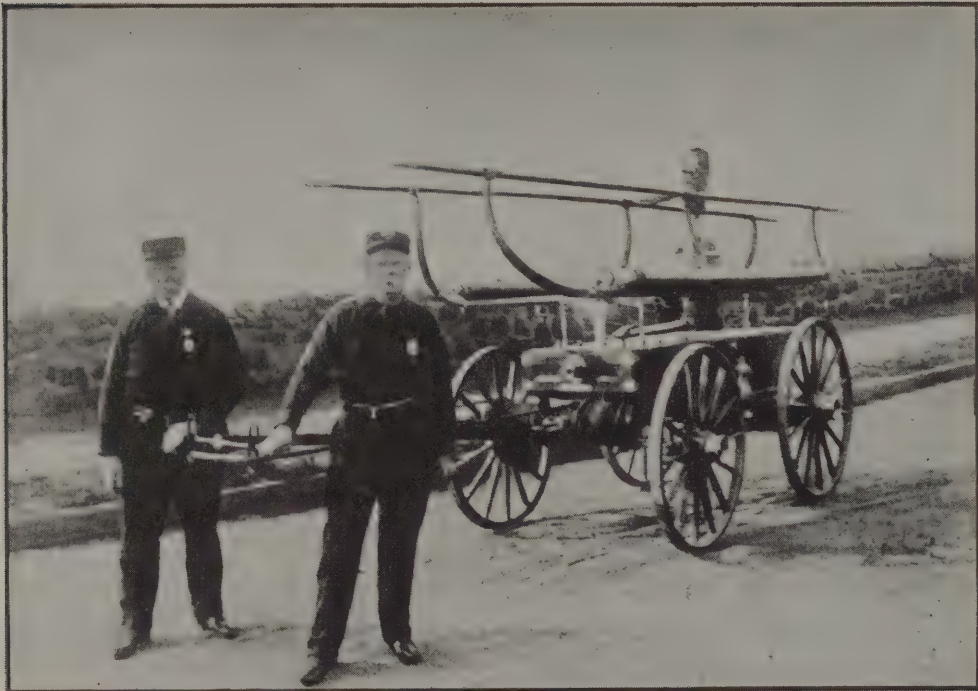
"As early as seven o'clock, Bergenline Avenue between Niles Avenue and Fifteenth Street (Fifty-ninth Street) began to be lined with people, and, when the ceremonies began, a crowd of at least four thousand stood in this block, while hundreds of others waited on Pierce Avenue and other streets along the line of march for the procession to pass.

"The Palisade Construction Company deserves the greatest thanks for their action in sprinkling the streets through which the paraders were to march. Neither those in the procession nor those who watched the parade suffered the least inconvenience from dust.

"There was a little delay in getting the observances under way, but

the waiting was made pleasant by the great quantities of fireworks continually going off in the sky. Drum corps and bands poured forth a continual stream of patriotic music and other airs, thus keeping the crowds in good spirits until the long wished for moment arrived. One tune above all others seemed to prevail, and that was, 'There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.'

"It was about nine o'clock when the firemen and their machines began to move up and form in line on the west side of the street opposite the Town Hall. The machine which attracted the most comment was the old, out-of-date apparatus known as the 'Window Washer', and many

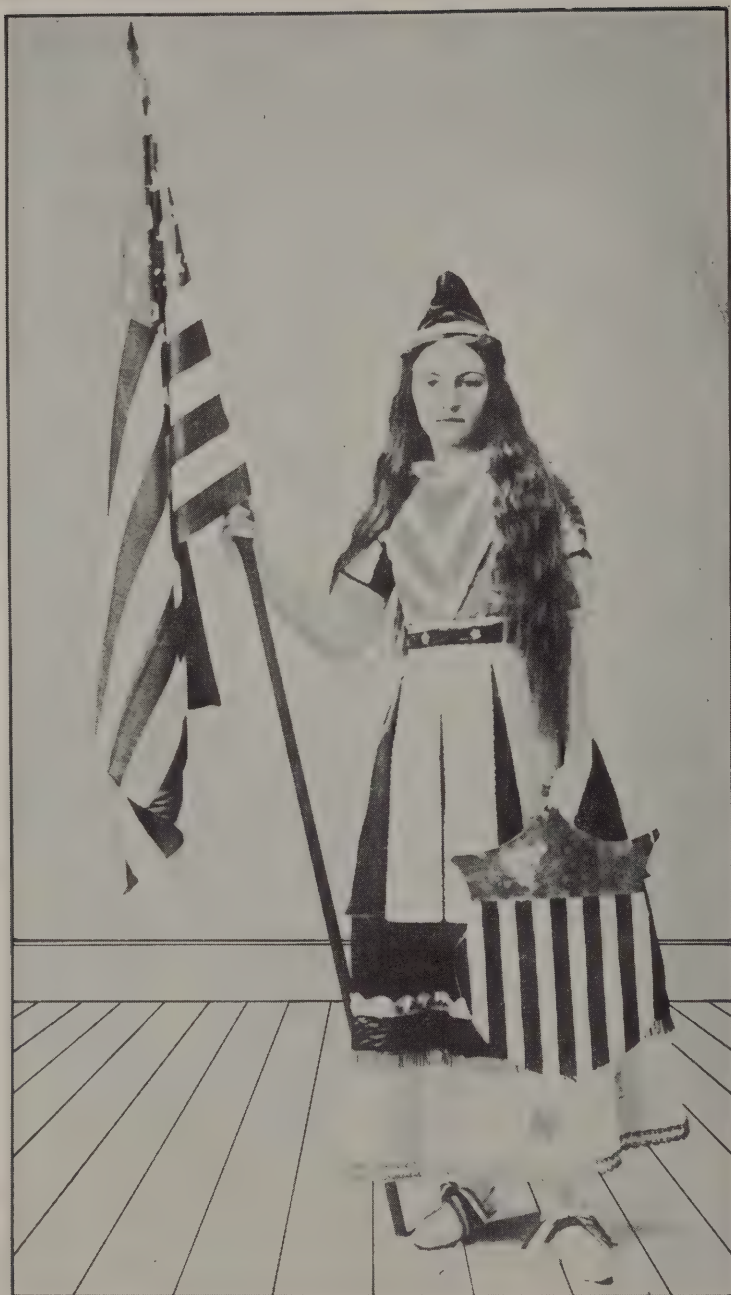


"Window Washer"

and varied were the comments and anecdotes told of the veteran fire extinguisher and the wonderful deeds performed by it in the early days of North Hudson. It was inspected by hundreds.

“Grand Marshal Alexander Ackerman with Peter Stilz³ as aide soon brought up the civic division of the parade and formed it in line on the opposite side of the street. Next came an unique float. It was a model of the Battleship Maine rigged on a bicycle with Henry Johnson, a member of the First Brigade of West Hoboken, in full uniform of a Jack tar. He received several rounds of applause as he passed through the crowded thoroughfare. Then came Stevens’ Cadets of Hoboken, in a very soldier-like manner as was also the case with the American Guard of West New York. Right gallantly did these two organizations bear themselves as body guard to the thirteen beautiful young women who represented the thirteen original states of the Union, each seated above the seal of the commonwealth. The particularly represented one, seated above them all, was the Goddess of Liberty in the person of Miss Tillie Brill⁴ in appropriate costume, while the rest appeared in robes of white with stove pipe hats of the national colors. We must give the names of these young girls: Emily Thourot, Margaret Thompson, Emma Albright, Jennie Darling, Kate Carroll, Beatrice Hangle, Dora Rover, Minnie Riesenberger, Bessie McDonald, Hattie Gompert, Kate Skelly, Etta Keefer, and Anna Ferguson⁵. On the float Supervising Principal Van Sickle impersonated Uncle Sam. He had superintended the building of the float and had complete charge of all its many features. It was the most pleasing spectacle of the parade. As the four beautiful white horses drew it up, Uncle Sam opened and conducted the subsequent proceedings in front of the Town Hall.

“The Goddess of Liberty holding the American flag arose and in a beautiful, well-trained and modulated accent delivered the following proclamation:



Tillie Brill

“ ‘Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen of the Town Council of West New York:

“ ‘You are the town fathers. To you are committed the public interests of the people of this municipality. Since our grand country was ushered into the theatre of nations I have been the mother of Liberty and Independence. I have kept track, as it were, of you and your forefathers. I knew this town when the soldiers of Revolutionary fame sailed up the placid Hudson, which flows peacefully on your eastern side to the sea. I have watched your growth. I knew the place when frogs croaked their songs here and made night hideous with their broken melodies, “You’ll drown!” I knew this hilltop when massive trees towered their heads towards heaven as sentinels to guard midnight’s silence. But I must not detain you with the recital of these historic reminiscences of your forgotten past. I hope the frogs have gone and that their croaking will no more be heard. I know that your majestic trees have given way to streets and houses. Your growth has been phenomenal. You have made such rapid pace that you stole away from one of your forefathers. I allude to North Bergen. You left her over here at the foot of the hill. You grew stronger and stronger, and another forefather was left in the rear procession. This was the passing of Guttenberg. You have really outgrown yourself. It is my mission tonight by virtue of that high authority vested in me as the guardian of nations to give you a new name. Your old title, the Township of Union, has outlived its purpose. I now christen you the Town of West New York.

“ ‘May your onward march be prosperous and peaceful. May you as the town’s fathers give an economical and honest administration of affairs. May public improvements go forward. You have still room for the onward march. May peace and success attend you in your efforts for the people. All hail to the new town of West New York! May the great King of Nations ever keep her on the starry banner of the free! Gentlemen, I now commit her to your care.’

“When she had finished, Mayor Otis followed and spoke in appropriate words of the birth of the new town.

“The members of the police department here gave a surprise and presented their Chief, Mayor Otis, with a beautiful badge of office.

Senator Daly stood on the town hall steps and made the presentation speech in behalf of the blue coats. He said in part that in the hands of Chief Otis was placed a great trust, to see that the law was abided by in the town and that the people could have made no better selection. On the badge was engraved: *Presented by the Police Department to our Chief J. E. Otis, as a token of esteem, August 27, 1898.*

“At the request of Uncle Sam the big assemblage sang ‘Columbia the Gem of the Ocean’, accompanied by the several bands of music.

“The procession then started and moved up Pierce Avenue, headed by Grand Marshal Ackerman and Aide Peter Stiliz, followed by Chief of Police Otis and a squad of twenty police on foot. Then came a carriage in which were Councilmen Hangle, Inniger, Loughlin and Glueck and Treasurer Schmidt. In a second carriage were Senator Daly, Freeholder Ord Darling, Recorder Einbeck, and Town Clerk Francis Tonn. Next in line came the nine members of the Board of Education on foot, followed by the Battleship Maine⁶ on the bicycle with Cadet Johnson awheel, and the signal corps of the Stevens’ Battalion. One hundred of the battalion were in heavy marching order, with the ambulance corps and paraphernalia behind. This battalion and the American Guard⁷, which followed, were the center of attraction.

“Teutonia Company in full uniform made an excellent showing. The Palisade Club, following, with black and white uniforms made a fine sight. Twenty of the members pulled a float which represented West New York in 1492. It was one of the unique features of the procession. With trees, wigwams, and Indians, one had a good idea of what the place looked like in the time of Columbus. Court West New York, Foresters of America, one hundred and fifty strong, was next in line, followed by King Lodge Order of True Friends. The next organization made a fine showing. It was the Columbia Turn Verein. Fifteen of the male members were mounted on spirited horses. They were followed by a large float. On this were male and female turners in costumes, carrying clubs and dumbbells. The Merry Owl Benevolent Association, the Einigkeit Singing Society, Third Ward Democratic Club, Dewey Club, the Hamilton Social Club, Henry Ruber Association, and the Mutual Benevolent Society of Capabassano marched

in the above-named order, each with a band of fife and drum corps, as were all other organizations in the procession. Such music had never been heard in West New York or in any other North Hudson town.



"American Guard Band"

"The float with Uncle Sam, the Goddess of Liberty, and the thirteen other pretty girls received an enthusiastic welcome as soon as it was sighted by the people.

"The firemen presented a magnificent sight. They were headed by Chief Christian Schmitt, Assistant Chief James Wolfe, and ex-chiefs Anton Andras, Roger Carroll, John Noble, William Waller, Garret Fink, and John Kammer. Mr. Noble was the first chief of the town and is an old fireman. His appearance commanded much attention. Liberty Hose Company led the fire companies. Then came the Wilcox Fire Brigade followed by the old 'Window Washer', drawn by the Metamora Club. Eclipse Hose Company of Guttenberg had a large delegation. Then came Hickory Engine Company with pumper and carriage followed by the

Excelsior boys with their handsome steamer and horse carriage. The Dark Town Fire Brigade followed. This represented a house on fire with colored firemen at work. It was made by Empire Truck Company and members. On the truck itself was a large silk stocking of red, white and blue. The company enjoys the reputation of being the silk stocking company and the large stocking was most appropriate. There were other fire companies represented in the parade. Those noticed were American Hose and Pioneer Hose of North Bergen, and Columbia Hose of Union Hill. Following the firemen was the West New York Baseball Club and the Glueckauf Company.

“Bands and drum corps kept up incessant strains of music. Altogether, such a demonstration has scarcely ever been witnessed in Hudson County. The people of the town and neighborhood had given themselves up to unrestrained enjoyment. And among all that mass of delighted humanity, not one appeared to enjoy the gay occasion with more zest than Mrs. Katherine Bickhard⁸, who, in her seventy years appeared fresh and vigorous, and called forth many expressions of congratulation and hopes that her days may be lengthened to her host of friends and admirers. The venerable lady was probably the oldest person who shared in the gay festivities.”

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After the grand procession had circled Tower Hill by way of the Hudson Boulevard, it passed through present Sixty-seventh Street to Boulevard East. There it followed the “loop” to Niles Avenue. As the jubilant paraders approached Bergenline Avenue again, the theme song echoed louder and louder:

“When you hear dem a bells go ding, ling ling,
All join 'round and sweetly you must sing,
And when the verse am through, in the chorus all join in,
There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight”.

With cheers and shouts the merry throng passed the gaily decorated Town Hall and proceeded southward to Hudson County Park. Here the big parade ended with a gorgeous display of fireworks and a grand banquet. The merrymakers were not too weary to waltz till the band played “Good-night Ladies.”

Parade of Progress

*Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day.*

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

IN THE SPRING of 1899, Mayor Otis¹ was returned to office by a grateful citizenry, together with the first Board of Council: Herman Meckert and William Bauer from the First Ward, Oscar L. Auf der Heide and John Scherer ("The Old War Horse") from the Second Ward, and Michael Hangle and Peter Inninger from the Third Ward. Otis remained at the helm until 1903 when his successor Dennis J. Murphy was elected.

* * * * *

West New York's second municipal election was highlighted by the appearance of a novel device—the voting machine. A few weeks before the election, a Rochester firm had placed a handsome specimen of this vote-recording phenomenon in the old Town Hall. The machine was enclosed in a beautiful walnut-finished cabinet, securely bound with ornate bands around its latitudinal dimensions.

The appearance of the five hundred pound innovation was the subject of considerable curiosity and comment among the leaders of the Third Ward. Ord Darling and "Mickey the Dude" put up an early appearance in the hope of penetrating the mystery and workings of this "Pandora's Box". Much to their mutual disappointment, however, the town clerk announced that the official demonstration would have to be delayed until the manufacturer's representative could arrive at the scene. A Third Warder, after skeptically regarding the outer appearance and dimensions of the machine, facetiously remarked: "It must be a dead one!"

Since incorporation day, West New York's growth has been remarkable. In 1895, the total population of Union Township was 5,005. The national census of 1910 put the figure for West New York at 13,560. Today's population is estimated at 43,000.

In 1909, the Hudson-Fulton Celebration brought many visitors to town. Every bit of available space on Boulevard East and on the top of the Palisades was crowded with spectators, who had traveled for miles to witness the magnificent river pageant. On September 25, amid the prolonged tooting of whistles and the incessant clanging of bells, replicas² of the "Half Moon" and "Clermont" proceeded upstream on the first lap of their journey to Albany. The mighty escorting armada consisted of local pleasure craft and representative naval vessels of the United States, the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Cuba, the Argentine Republic, and Guatemala.

In 1910, the first great building boom brought many new brick structures to the Third Ward and new stores to Bergenline Avenue. The growth continued into the 1920's when Monitor Park became a residential section.



Bergenline Avenue Looking North in 1914

The West New York Civic Society, headed by such progressive and far-sighted citizens as Frederick J. Sutro, Dr. John Clement Justin, John F. Justin, Justus Hattemer, August Hassemer and Francis Lloyd had a wholesome effect on the political and social development of the community. In the same decade, West New York's first Board of Trade³ was organized. In 1912, this body erected a gigantic West New York sign on the bluff at Boulevard East. Its enormous eighteen foot letters could easily be read from the river. At night the great landmark was illuminated by hundreds of electric lights.

* * * * *

In 1914, the cornerstone of the new Municipal Building was laid. The old Town Hall had for a long time been far too small for the needs of a modern municipality. The plans for the new structure were drawn by William Mayer, Junior, and the new municipal headquarters completed in August, 1915.

* * * * *

In the first decade of the present century a tiny industrial acorn was planted in West New York. Through the years it has become a mighty tree, the branches of which have spread throughout the town. The prosperity of modern West New York can be traced largely to its embroidery establishments. Today, the community can boast that it is in the heart of the "Schiffli Embroidery Industry". From a modest beginning with less than a half dozen small factories, a vast industry has evolved, producing millions of dollars worth of fine products annually on ten and fifteen yard machines⁴. Many other manufacturers of nationally known products have been attracted to the community because of its desirable location. In 1939, their number was estimated at 265; today, the figure has greatly increased.

* * * * *

In September, 1915, West New York passed another milestone in its progress—Prosperity Week. During this week its citizens celebrated four great events: the dedication of the Municipal Building, the completion of Public School Number Five, the laying of the cornerstone of Public School Number Six, and, last but not least, the opening of the Great White Way on Bergenline Avenue where modern electric lighting replaced the crude carbon lamps in West New York's shopping center.

Elaborate plans were developed by a committee of fifty under the dual leadership of Mayor Oscar Auf der Heide and President Joseph Stiliz of the Board of Trade. These included a grand parade, a brilliant display of fireworks, a block dance, and a concerted drive to urge the construction of the Lindenthal Bridge⁵ across the Hudson. All objectives were realized except the last. The great civic and industrial parade⁶ took place on September 20, 1915.

During World War I, West New York made a great contribution to the war effort. The total number of inducted and enlisted men from West New York and Guttenberg was 1,323. On the home front, the Red Cross and the Union Welfare League of West New York and Guttenberg provided kits for the servicemen. Local Boy Scouts assisted in the various war loans. The patriotic activity was fittingly summarized in the "Welcome Home" booklet of July 4, 1919:

"No, we have not failed! West New York has given its full measure of devotion, and more. Our purses have been opened wide to the calls of mercy and need; our hands have labored and our feet have run to service, our hearts have yielded their dearest and truest and best! We have 'fought a good fight!' We have 'kept the faith!' And in the years to come our sons and daughters can point with pride to the record that West New York has made."

* * * * *

During World War I, many new residents came to West New York—wage earners, who were attracted by the high, open spaces on the Palisades with convenient access to Manhattan. The number of daily commuters rose sharply, and the Public Service trolleys, on which "conductorettes" were employed to relieve the manpower shortage, were crowded beyond capacity during rush hours. In competition with the traction company, private individuals introduced the "jitney", forerunner of the modern streamlined bus. These primitive "buses"—Stanley "steamers," Cadillacs, Packard "twin sixes", and other high-powered vehicles with improvised open-air bodies—had leather upholstered seats accommodating about sixteen passengers. Noisily, they ascended Pershing Road, laboring past Simon Kelley's Hotel (the present Lou's Point Tavern) to the summit of the hill.

The first routes were established along Palisade and Park Avenues; later the Crosstown and Hillside lines were added. After a period of bitter but lucrative competition during which even "spite fences" were erected at West Shore Ferry, "jitney" owners sold their more up-to-date buses and franchises to Public Service at inflated prices.

* * * * *

On November 15, 1919, Charles A. Cusick Post No. 15 of the American Legion held its first meeting at Public School Number Six. This Post played an important part in civic affairs. The construction of a Community Center was advocated by the Legionnaires, plans were drawn, and an active drive for funds undertaken. Upon learning, however, that the Board of Education had passed a resolution to build a high school, the Legionnaires abandoned their own plans and threw their support behind this project. On May 30, 1928, Memorial High School



Memorial High School

was dedicated "To Those Who Made the Supreme Sacrifice", Governor A. Harry Moore having been guest of honor on that occasion.

* * * * *

At a special referendum election held on March 4, 1924, the question of consolidating the seven North Hudson towns was submitted to the voters. Only two municipalities, Union Hill and West Hoboken, voted in favor of the plan and merged into Union City in the following year. Although there were many supporters of the plan in West New York, it was defeated by a margin of 290 votes⁷.

* * * * *

On the crisp Sunday afternoon of October 16, 1927, New York's genial Mayor, "Jimmy" Walker, came over to West New York's Municipal Building to eulogize his old friend, "Phil" Payne, and to dedicate a cenotaph in his honor. Payne, a member of the town's Board of Education and the Legion's Cusick Post, had been City Editor of the *Hudson Dispatch*. Later he became Managing Editor of Captain J. M. Patterson's *New York Daily News*, from which, by a tempting offer, he was lured away to William Randolph Hearst's *Mirror*. Inspired by the epoch-making flight of Charles A. Lindbergh, Payne resolved to be the first airplane passenger to Rome. His ambitious plan, however, ended in tragedy. On September 7, 1927, he "took off" in "Old Glory" from Old Orchard Beach, Maine, hoping to increase the circulation of *The Mirror* through the venture. Nobody knows how far "Old Glory" flew; probably she crashed into the Atlantic before she had covered a thousand miles. Weeks later, a salt-incrusted wheel of her landing gear, bearing grim evidence of the catastrophe, was found. This last remnant of "Old Glory" is displayed on the second floor of the West New York Public Library.

Since 1923, the American Legion has dedicated several memorials to their "buddies" killed in action. Trees were planted in the park behind Miller Stadium and along Boulevard East. On November 14, 1933, the white Aztec pyramid, covered with the memorial plaques of fallen comrades and situated on the crest of the Palisades, was dedicated. Here the annual Memorial Day Parade comes to an end, while with impressive ceremonies Commanders of the Veterans of Foreign Wars place wreaths at the base of this unique monument.

* * * * *

After Pearl Harbor, West New York citizens again enthusiastically supported the war effort. Thousands of boys left town for training camps, many never to return. On the home front, in addition to the Red Cross and service canteen activities, two Selective Service Boards headed by L. V. Roth and L. J. Rad and assisted by an Advisory Board for Registrants⁸, administered the induction of the men into the armed forces. A Civilian Defense Council under the capable command of Dr. Louis Bader set up an efficient staff⁹ "to provide for the common defense" of the community. In co-operation with the Office of Price Administration, a Local War Price and Rationing Board¹⁰ was established with headquarters in the Public Library. Patriotic citizens and members of the teaching staff of West New York's schools issued ration books to the residents of the town. At the end of hostilities it could again be said that West New York had given its "full measure of devotion."

But the patriotic activity of West New Yorkers did not end with the war. Their sentiments of gratitude and those of their chosen leaders found expression in the prompt development of temporary veterans' housing projects. West New York, indeed, can proudly claim that it was the first community in North Hudson to provide homes for her returning sons. In addition to the temporary units, permanent housing is now being provided.

The finest example of community spirit, however, was West New York's tribute to its paraplegic hero, John Borella. Under Chairman Leo E. Honore, a fund was raised to provide a specially equipped home for John, in which he could live with his parents. The idea of the Borella Home, conceived by the Franks Athletic Association and kindled by John Armellino, the present Veterans' Adviser, was made possible by the spontaneous co-operation of West New York's thoughtful citizens. The Commissioners donated the land, Architect George Willaredt provided the plans without remuneration, and all sub-contractors furnished much of the material and labor¹¹ gratuitously.

On November 9, 1947, John Borella's home was dedicated, while sixty army planes roared overhead. Thus, a grateful Government, incidentally, honored one of its valiant heroes.

“Dear Old Golden Rule Days”

*'Tis education forms the common mind:
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined.*

—ALEXANDER POPE

IN 1857, when West New York was still included in North Bergen Township, John Hillric Bonn¹, founder of North Hudson's transportation system, was Superintendent of Schools. His leadership as an educator was recognized far beyond the limits of Hudson County, for the eleven-volume *German-American Encyclopedia* edited by Professor A. J. Schem was published largely through his efforts.



Bullserry Road School

In 1863, School District Number Nine² of Union Township, which included Weehawken Village, West New York, and Dallytown, was organized. Dr. Charles Siedhof³, Superintendent of Schools in the Town of Union, served Union Township in that capacity also.

According to the earliest *Minute book of the Trustees of School District Number Ten*⁴, the first trustees in District Number

Nine were George Roesse, Thomas Henry, and Cornelius Healy. In 1863, James Norton⁵ taught a class of twelve pupils in the dance hall of John Schaiders' Hotel on Bergenline Avenue. (The old minute book refers to Bergenline Avenue as the Rail Road.) In 1865, new quarters⁶ were found on Bullserry Road (Park Avenue at Westover Place), where Mr. Norton continued to teach the rudiments in a more suitable environment. County Superintendent William Leverett Dickinson⁷ considered this early school house most inadequate. In his report of 1873, he

remarked that the district was "fortunate in not owning it." Today, the old building stands on Park Avenue, remodeled into a comfortable home.

In April, 1866, as a result of a petition signed by two thirds of the Township's inhabitants, School District Number Ten⁸, the West New York District, was set off from the greater District Number Nine to serve the residents west of Bergenline Avenue. Trustees George Roesse, Conrad Bickhard, and Adolph Roehm, immediately voted to raise \$1,200 for a school house on Madison Street. Four lots were acquired from Henry F. Maackens, Peter Mechler, and Catherine Schaidler (grantors to the old West New York Land Verein). Conrad Bickhard drew the plans for a one room school house⁹ which was completed in the fall of 1866. In his annual report for that year Dr. Siedhof announced: "We have built a very handsome school-house¹⁰ in one of the districts which cost, with the land, three thousand, two hundred dollars." In this building, Mr. L. W.



Public School Number One (1866)

Annan¹¹ instructed the youth until 1878, and Emilie Kallmer taught the Kindergarten class.

Before 1883, the little school house of District Ten, enlarged to a two room school, was furnished with modern desks, a globe, an organ, and a circulating library¹². Within eight years, however, the building was too small for the increased school enrollment; and, in 1891, Public School Number One in District Ten, a brick building containing eight classrooms,



Public School Number One (1891)

was constructed. Henry C. Opdyke was the first principal of this school. Its attractive tower contained a clock and bell, the pleasant tone of which could be clearly heard, especially in the quiet evenings, when it struck the hours and half hours.

On June 19, 1896, West New York's first formal graduation exercises were held at Riesenberger's¹³ (later Duhne's Hall) on the West Boulevard at Tower Hill Avenue (Sixty-seventh Street).

When Dr. Jared Barhite¹⁴ served as Supervising Principal of the West New York School system, Public Schools Three and Four were erected. School Number Three, headed by Principal Charles F. Jones, served the growing Dallytown section; Number Four, administered by Warren F. Hannas, the northern section of the town.

Under Supervising Principal Holly W. Maxson the school system was greatly expanded by the addition of Schools Five and Six. Austin H. Updyke, at the time Principal of School Number Three, was appointed head of Number Six, while Warren F. Hannas became administrator of Number Five. Mr. Updyke's position soon became vacant, however, by his promotion to the responsible post of County Superintendent of Schools. Wilson W. Staver, who had succeeded Mr. Updyke at Number Three, became head of Number Five after the death of Mr. Hannas. During this time Vaughn D. Stocking was principal at School Number One and still holds this post. Edward E. Carroll heads Number Three, Nathan Richman Number Four, Dr. J. Edgar Dransfield Number Five, and John J. White, Junior Number Six. School Number Two, where Mary C. Lucas, Agatha Grimm (Mrs. Joseph Stilz), and Mary P. Diamond had been principals, has become headquarters of the West New York Day Nursery. In December 1913, Henrietta R. Reed was appointed as the first North Hudson school nurse at West New York.

In the fall of 1917, West New York opened its first high school term¹⁵ with seventy-five students in Number Six School with Carlos A. Woodworth serving as High School Principal. Under his leadership and with the capable assistance of Harry L. Bain, who became Vice-Principal in 1919, the foundation for higher education was laid. The High School grew so rapidly that the building at Number Six, at that time the largest in town, proved inadequate, and the erection of a new building became a necessity. In 1928, Memorial High School was dedicated. In the same year, Mr. Bain was appointed Superintendent of Schools to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Maxson. Miss Elizabeth V. Borneman became Vice-Principal of Memorial.

During the trying years of World War II, Mr. Woodworth, though ailing in health, with the able assistance and sympathetic support of Miss

Borneman, performed his duties as Principal of Memorial with steadfast devotion. It was a profound shock to the school community and the municipality when in February, 1945, the news came of the passing of "Pop" Woodworth, as he was affectionately known to faculty and students. The following well-deserved tribute was paid to his memory by Mr. Bain:



Carlos A. Woodworth

"Mr. Woodworth was one of the most able, scholarly and liberal school men that I have ever known.

"He was a man of stalwart and forthright character, yet kindly, generous, thoughtful, and just in his relationships with others.

"We have lost a loyal friend, and the community an outstanding leader and citizen."

Carlos Woodworth's life work was continued by his faithful assistant, Miss Borneman, who to the satisfaction of faculty, students, and community was ap-

pointed Principal of Memorial High School. She was to be assisted by Willis S. Eshleman, Dean of Boys, who since the establishment of the school had headed the History Department. Before the end of the year, however, students and faculty were saddened by the news of his death. With his passing, the school lost a genuine scholar, a good disciplinarian, an effective teacher, and a wise counselor. Vice-Principal Kenneth D. Hart and four deans¹⁶ now assist Miss Borneman in developing the progressive policies of the school.

Since July, 1945, the Veterans' Evening High School under the direction of Vincent McGuiness, assisted by Anthony Cavadi, has provided the opportunity for G.I.'s to complete their high school education. Two

years later, through the efforts of Mr. Bain and John C. McGrath of the High School faculty, Rutgers University opened the North Hudson Center, University College, at Memorial High School where qualified applicants may complete two years of college work. The formal opening exercises¹⁷ of this Center took place on February 4, 1947.

* * * * *

Many West New Yorkers take for granted the achievements of Memorial High School's football team, but very few know that the sport came to town under "regal" auspices. In the early 1920's, neighboring high schools, particularly those old scholastic rivals Union Hill and Emerson, had well-established gridiron teams, while West New York's activities were limited to basketball, baseball, and track.

The father and patron of football in West New York was none other than Counselor Walter Sherwood. Always a prominent figure about town in his immaculate black suit, black fedora, spats, wing collar, bow tie, cane—which he flourished with gusto—and the perennial pink carnation in the lapel of his coat, the Counselor, as a true sport fan, had won the title of "King of the Jungles"¹⁸ at a colorful gathering in Gooseberry Grove, North Bergen.

When a group of high school boys presented a petition for football, Sherwood championed the movement, which at the time was not too popular with the school authorities. It was through his efforts that football became a recognized sport at Memorial. The most ardent sport fan could not have been more jubilant than the genial Counselor, when, after many setbacks, Memorial defeated Union Hill for the first time. At the victory rally in Memorial's Auditorium, he beamed triumphantly on the stage where the goal post of the vanquished rival was displayed.

The extensive athletic activities of Memorial High School have been supplemented by the "Hub" On October 1, 1943, Commissioner of Parks and Playgrounds John F. Otis, assisted by a competent staff, formed this "civic organization for the cultural promotion of the youth of West New York." Aside from sponsoring numerous sports, the "Hub" issues a monthly publication, *The Hub Herald*. During the war, this paper

was regularly mailed to the boys in service, keeping them well-informed of the happenings in the schools and on the home front.

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Headed by capable administrators and staffed by efficient teachers, the schools of West New York are ever alert to the needs of the community, whether they be vocational training, Americanization courses for the foreign born, or informal discussion groups attempting to solve problems of human relations. From the modest one room school house west of the "Avenue" to the modern, well-equipped schools of today, the same ideal remains—to develop the natural abilities of the individual and help him to become the good citizen of tomorrow.

“Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul!”

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;
God is not dead, nor doth he sleep!
The wrong shall fail,
The right prevail*

With peace on earth, good will to men.

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

THERE WERE no churches in early West New York. In the summer of 1853, Rev. Leopold Mohn¹, a missionary selected by the Hudson County Bible Society, held services in the German language at old Grove Church² in North Bergen for the early Protestant settlers of West New York. At Guttenberg zealous priests read the first masses for Catholic residents at the home of Mrs. Minnix³. Here, the great parish of St. Joseph's had its humble origin. Later, the rapidly growing congregation held services at the Guttenberg Town Hall until 1865. In that year the first brick church⁴ at Herman Avenue (Seventieth Street) and Polk Street was dedicated by Bishop Bailey. On March 19, 1866, the congregation, under Father Timothy Pacitti, was incorporated as St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Guttenberg⁵.

* * * * *

At the time of West New York's incorporation, the town had but three churches—St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Zion Evangelical Church, and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church—all using the German language.

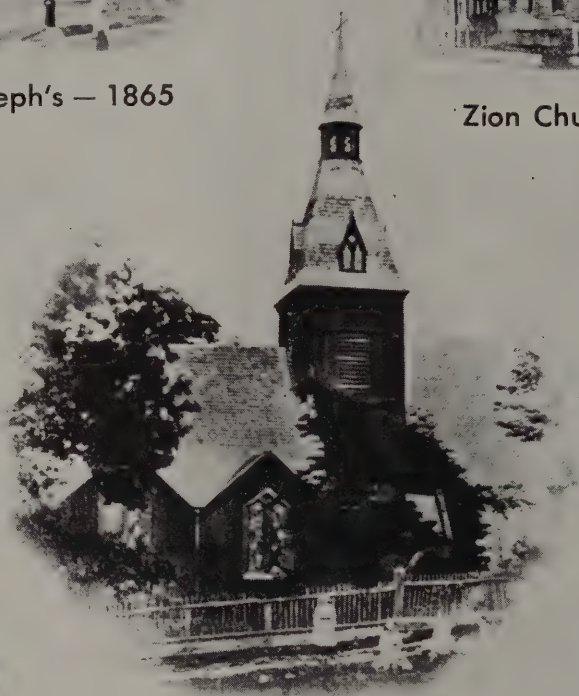
St. John's was organized in 1871 at the home of Township Chairman William H. Schmidt on Dallytown Road. The congregation held its first services in the old one-room school house of District Number Ten⁶ with



St. Joseph's — 1865



Zion Church — 1875



Old Grove — 1847



St. Mary's
1895



St. John's
1875

Rev. R. W. Buehler as its first pastor. On May 28, 1875, Rev. G. Burkhard laid the cornerstone for the first church, which was dedicated on September 27th of that year. The old building, standing on its original site on Madison Street, has been known since 1907 as Gethsemane Baptist Church. Rev. Joseph T. Kearney is pastor of this congregation.

In the summer of 1875, Zion Church⁷ was erected at the corner of Adams and Sixty-first Streets on property donated by Jacob Gunset. Its dedication took place on November 7, 1875. Rev. E. P. Luippold⁸ served this congregation for many years. In 1899 the building was purchased⁹ by Grove Reformed Church for a mission which later became Trinity Reformed Church. The building of old Zion Church today serves the West New York Assembly, an evangelistic organization superintended by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boyle.

In 1895, Rev. Alexander Berghold¹⁰ was chosen by Bishop Wigger to organize a congregation for the German-speaking Catholics of West New York who previously had attended St. Joseph's Church in Guttenberg during the pastorate of Rev. Joseph H. Hill. With remarkable energy in the face of ailing health, Father Berghold organized the congregation, purchased the property on Tower Hill, drew the plans and specifications for the edifice, and personally superintended its construction—all within the brief period of five months. On October 27, 1895, St. Mary's (Our Lady Help of Christians) was dedicated by Bishop Wigger, who also blessed the familiar "bells¹¹ of St. Mary's" in the eighty-three foot tower.

In 1899, St. Mary's future was entrusted to the late Monsignor Lill¹², who with the assistance of Fathers Reichert and Koenig served his church faithfully for forty-seven years. During his pastorate, St. Mary's School, the new church, rectory, and convent were built. Rev. James F. Weisbecker, the present pastor, is assisted by Rev. Joseph Stockhammer.

On August 3, 1898, Rev. A. M. Kammer became pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Guttenberg. Soon after his arrival the present site of St. Joseph's on Palisade Avenue and Sixty-fifth Street was acquired. Excavation was begun early in the present century, and the cornerstone¹³ laid by Bishop O'Connor on Sunday, September 13, 1903. Shortly thereafter, mass was celebrated in the basement of the present edifice, the

convent¹⁴ was moved from Guttenberg to its present location opposite the church, and St. Joseph's of Guttenberg became St. Joseph's of the Palisades. In September, 1910, St. Joseph's School of West New York was opened.

On November 27, 1911, the late Monsignor William A. Keyes became pastor of St. Joseph's of the Palisades, and under his leadership the church building was completed. It was dedicated by Bishop O'Connor on February 3, 1913. Monsignor Keyes, assisted by Father C. A. Heavey, also improved and enlarged St. Joseph's Grammar School, and in 1931, founded St. Joseph's High School. A community center now bearing his name was also established.

Monsignor Keyes' death on February 8, 1947, following a long period of illness was a severe shock to the entire community. A faithful shepherd was called to his reward, and the community lost a distinguished and respected citizen. The simplest tribute to his memory was paid by a pupil of St. Joseph's Grammar School. When asked by a local grocer whether he liked having a day off from school, the lad replied sadly, "It's all right, but we would rather have our Monsignor." Today, Rev. Joseph P. Connor¹⁵ carries on the work of Monsignor Keyes with the assistance of four curates: Fathers Thomas G. Grant, John A. McHale, Martin F. Sherry, and Augustin B. Sauro.

In 1900, Father Allesandro Idelli was delegated by Bishop Wigger to organize a congregation for the Italian-speaking Catholics of West New York. In that year the first masses of Our Lady of Libera Church were read in Fink's Hall, and for a brief period in Mueller's bake shop on Polk Street. In 1903, during the pastorate of Father John Rongetti, construction of the first church building of Our Lady of Libera (Madonna della Libera) on Hudson Boulevard was begun. The church was completed under Father Michael De Sapio and dedicated on November 12, 1905. On December 27, 1916, the present pastor, Monsignor Leonard Borgetti was appointed head of the congregation. The new edifice of Our Lady of Libera was completed in June, 1937. Monsignor Borgetti is assisted by Fathers Thomas Mansfield and George Clyde.

Old St. John's Lutheran Church on Madison Street, the early history of which has already been sketched, grew so rapidly under the Pastors

H. Schoppe¹⁶, and H. O. Weber that it became necessary to seek a new home. The location at Bergenline Avenue and Sixty-fifth Street was acquired in 1905 and plans for the new edifice drawn during the following year. Pastor Weber having accepted a call to New Rochelle, the construction was undertaken after the arrival of his successor, Rev. Paul F. J. Becker. Excavation was begun on March 23, 1907, the cornerstone laid on May 16, and the red brick edifice dedicated on Luther's birthday, November 10, 1907. Pastor Becker served his flock faithfully in its new home until he was called to his reward in January, 1916. In June of that year, the present pastor, Rev. Dr. Walther Eickmann¹⁷ accepted the call to St. John's. During his pastorate the congregation's indebtedness was liquidated, and in 1925, a Sunday School Chapel erected.

On September 18, 1898, Dr. I. W. Gowen of Grove Reformed Church began a mission Sunday School¹⁸ in the old Zion Evangelical Church building on Adams Street with "Bert" Prentice as teacher. In July, 1903, Rev. Dr. A. W. Hopper became Dr. Gowen's assistant and was placed in charge of the West New York mission. Trinity was organized as an independent congregation on April 14, 1908. On October 10, 1910, the cornerstone of the present ivy-covered church on Palisade Avenue and Sixtieth Street was laid, and on October 23rd of the same year the new church was dedicated. The tower and wing were added to the edifice in 1925. Dr. Hopper died April 18, 1929 and was succeeded by Rev. Frank L. Freet. The present pastor, Rev. Daniel Y. Brink, has served Trinity since 1942.

Lebanon (Swedish) Lutheran Church was organized at St. John's Lutheran Church in Union Hill on August 20, 1902. Ten years later the congregation came to West New York. In June 1912, the cornerstone of its first building on Hudson Avenue was laid, and in September, services were held in the completed basement. The cornerstone of the present building on Palisade Avenue was laid on July 9, 1923 and the church dedicated on March 30th of the following year. Throughout the trying construction period Rev. Gustaf Lindstrom, who died on October 11, 1931, was at the helm. The present pastor is Rev. Lawrence J. Holt.

The First United Presbyterian Church of West New York was

organized on October 27, 1908. Services were held in a portable chapel with Rev. A. M. Reed as the pastor. The cornerstone of the present church on Fifty-third Street and Hudson Avenue was laid on February 22, 1914 and the church dedicated on July 26th of that year. Rev. George E. Berrian was pastor at the time. He was followed by Rev. S. P. Barackman who served the congregation for more than twenty years. The present pastor is Rev. Alexander A. Balden.

Rev. B. C. Weinlaeder of Grantwood, New Jersey was the first pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, which held its first services on October 17, 1909. Under his successor, Rev. Frank Jena, the church was erected in 1924. St. Paul's present pastor is Rev. Harry Kroll-Hemkey.

In addition to the four churches which already graced Palisade Avenue, West New York's Avenue of Churches, a new house of worship, Temple Shaare Zedek was erected in 1924, by a Hebrew congregation which previously worshipped in a one-story synagogue known as Talmud Torah on Fifty-fourth Street. The first high services were held in the new building in October, 1925 with Rabbi Nathan Solomon officiating. Rabbi Maurice Stiskin is the present head of the congregation.

The Swedish Evangelical Mission Church was founded on October 7, 1905 in Union Hill. The present church on Fifty-second Street was built in 1923, under the direction of Elder Eric Peterson. Rev. Evart Dahlstrom is the present pastor.

Organized in 1918, the West New York Baptist Church held its services in English and German at the old City Theatre on Sixtieth Street near Bergenline Avenue. The present church at Sixty-first Street and Harrison Place was built in 1928. Rev. John Lehnert has served this congregation for many years.

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church was organized on November 3, 1912 by a small group which met over a carpenter's shop on Harrison Place under the direction of Mr. W. H. Winans, a ministerial student who served the congregation for a year. The first pastor was Rev. H. C. Steinheimer, a missionary preparing for service in China. A small frame church building on Monroe Place was erected in 1914, and the present

building dedicated on October 18, 1925. Rev. W. Evan Fullerton is pastor at St. Paul's.

The Church of the Redeemer serves the Italian Protestants of West New York. It was begun as a mission in old Zion Church. The present home on the corner of Madison and Fifty-ninth Streets was built in 1926. Until recently Rev. Anthony Caliandro was pastor of the congregation. Rev. J. M. Riccitelli is the present pastor.

The Assyrian Apostolic Church of the Virgin Mary was erected in 1927. The pastor of this congregation is Rev. Elias Sugar.

The Armenian Presbyterian Church of West New York was organized in West Hoboken early in the present century. While Rev. A. A. Georgizian was pastor, the church was built over the basement of Lebanon Lutheran Church on Hudson Avenue and dedicated on June 24, 1928. It is now served by Rev. Socrates M. Mackitar. The congregation also supports an Armenian Mission at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Paterson.

Ebenezer Baptist Church was organized on March 7, 1933. Services were held at the West New York Assembly (Old Zion) and later in the Church of the Redeemer. The first pastor was Dr. Martin Heringer who held services in German and English. The congregation worships in a building at Adams and Sixtieth Streets. Rev. Herbert J. Freeman, a former pastor who has served a congregation in Wisconsin since 1945, has recently resumed his pastoral duties here.

Chiesa Apostolica Cristiana was founded in 1930. This congregation holds its services in the West New York Baptist Church. Its pastor is Rev. Giacomo Napolitano.

Organized in December, 1947, the Evangelical Christian Church (Pentecostal) holds its services on Sunday afternoons in the Church of the Redeemer. The congregation is served by Rev. Dr. Taylor H. Frazier.

In December, 1921, the First Church of Christ, Scientist was founded under the name "Christian Science Society of West New York". The first reading room was located on Bergenline Avenue near Fifty-ninth

Street. In 1923, the society was recognized by the Mother Church in Boston. A reading room is maintained on Sixtieth Street where regular church and Sunday school services are held. Recently, the society has purchased the old mansion of John Crosby Brown and the adjoining Clifton Chapel of Old Grove Church on Louisa Place, Weehawken.

West New York is proud of its churches, for they have contributed greatly to the spiritual and moral welfare of the community. With the world in its present state of confusion, doubt, and fear there is always one refuge to which faltering humanity may turn, as so beautifully expressed in the following lines by Rev. Daniel York Brink of Trinity:

"There Stands the Church!"

"While men debate and anger flows
And earth is swept with new-born woes,
Unheeded, yet a witness still,
She points from earth to heaven's will.
There stands the Church!
To search each cause and show its lack
Of justice, and to turn men back
To basic virtues in an age
When moral chaos blurs the page.
There stands the Church!
To stop to speak to those who fall
Crushed by life's burden, and to call
To sympathetic deed the strong,
To gird the heart with faith and song.
There stands the Church!
To lure youth on to build on earth
Where love and truth will bring to birth
A kingdom based on brotherhood
That bids each seek the other's good
There stands the Church!
To quicken sluggish hearts to prayer,
To save mankind, to give and share,
To kindle with the Holy Word,
A passion for the living Lord.
There stands the Church!"

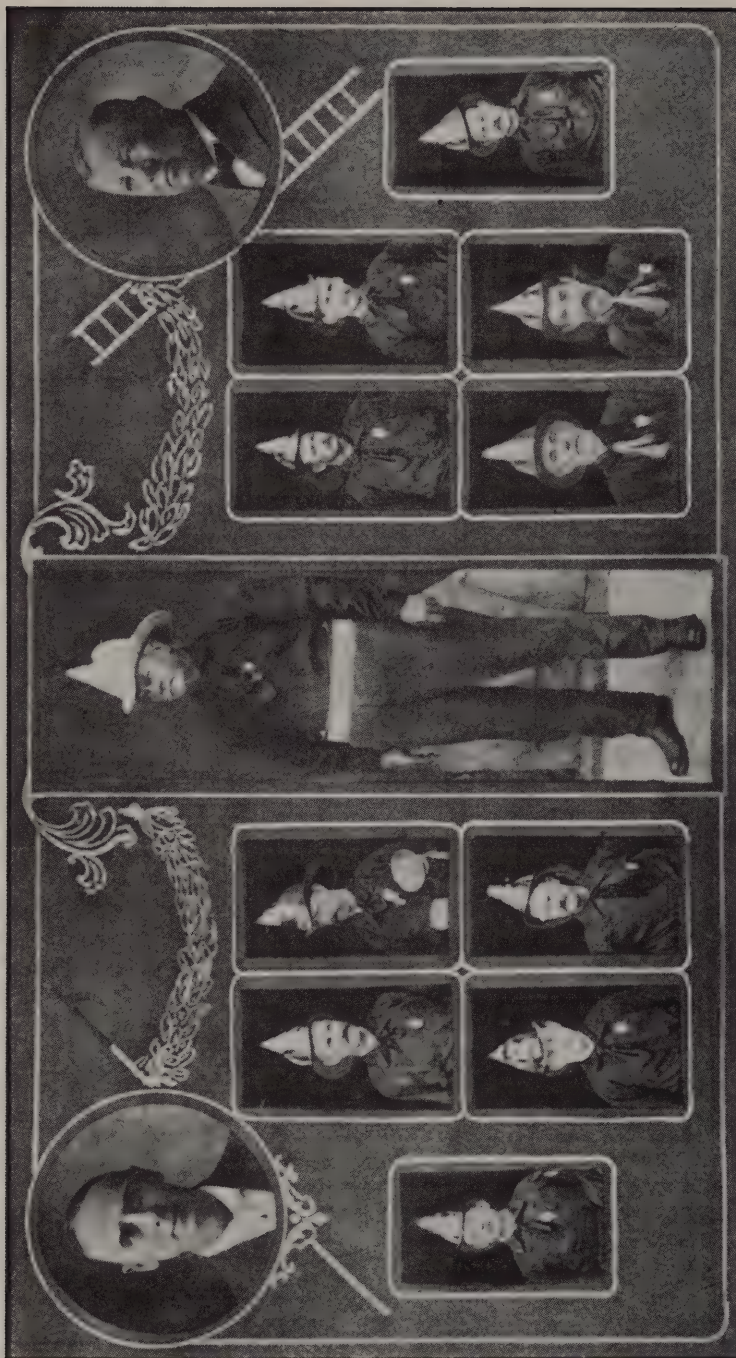
Fire Fighters and Blue Coats

THE EARLIEST volunteer fire department of Union Township was Friendship Engine Company Number One. Reference is made to this company in Conrad Bickhard's obituary which appeared in the *Jersey City Daily Press* on October 19, 1874. (See page 53.)

Under the name Niagara Hose Company, Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two was organized in Garret Fink's Hall at Polk Street and Pierce Avenue on May 23, 1889, with fourteen charter members¹. In the following year, the old Board of Fire Trustees was abolished, the company came under the jurisdiction of the Union Township Committee, and on May 24th, Garret Fink² was elected Chief. Fire fighting equipment was purchased from Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two of Hoboken and that Company's name was applied to the local volunteers. Empire Hook and Ladder Company had its headquarters in the old Town Hall until 1901, when it moved into a new brick fire house on Bergenline Avenue north of Fifty-ninth Street.

Hickory Engine Company Number One was organized November 9, 1889 at Richard Stanton's Hotel at Bergenline Avenue and Sixty-first Street. After six preliminary "get togethers" the first official meeting³ was held on December 4, 1889, when a charter was adopted.

On February 3, 1890, the Hickory volunteers purchased the engine of Protection Company Number Seven of Stapleton, Staten Island. On February 6th, the apparatus was turned over to the local company, the guests from Staten Island marching with them to the Town Hall. The Township Committee, however, refused to shelter the apparatus, and it was left in the street. When the Staten Island firemen suggested taking the engine back home, G. C. Widmeyer offered to house it in his barn at Jackson and Sixty-first Streets. Finally, on May 12, 1890, the Township Committee officially recognized Hickory Engine Company, and in June, 1895, the first township-sponsored headquarters was opened on Bergenline



"Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two"

George A. Melrose	John S. Darling	John E. Otis, Sr.	Garret Fink	John C. Gerisch	John Kammer	Alphonse Thourot
Christian Bauer	George Gleitsmann	Ord Darling	Chief	Nicholas Mingst	Thomas Greeley	John Allen

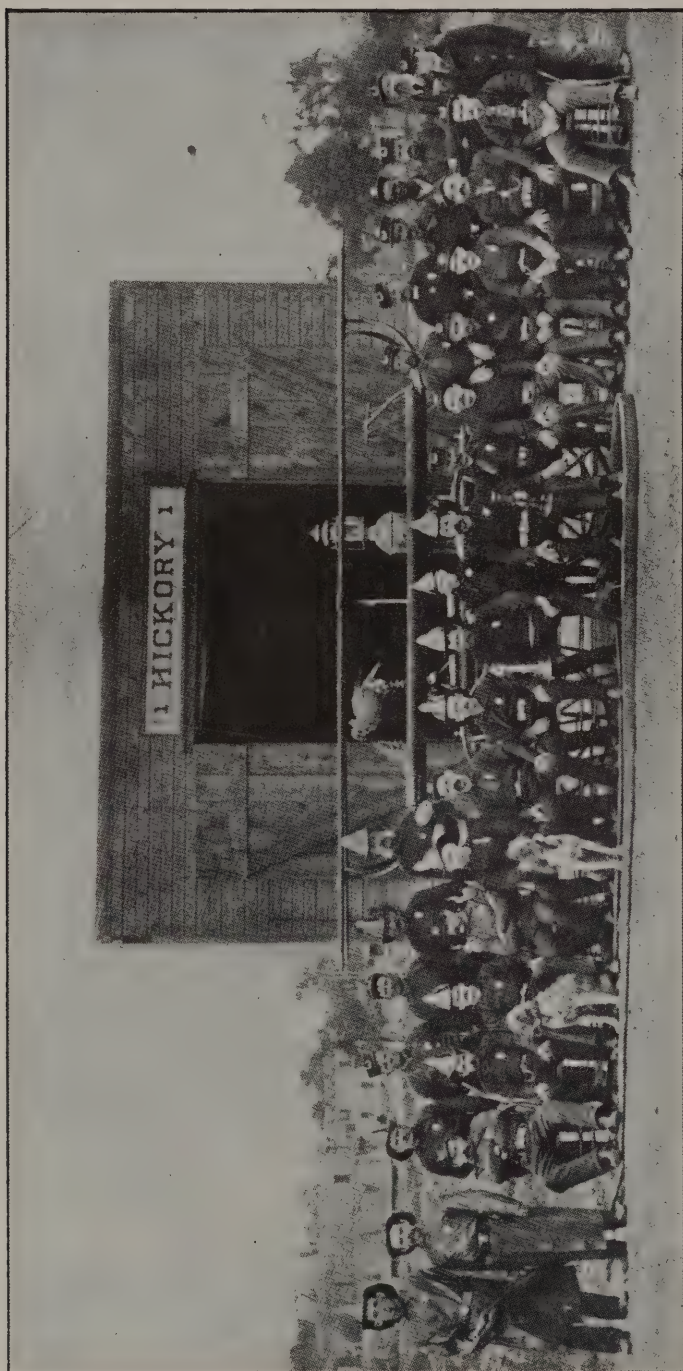
Avenue at Sixty-third Street. Prior to this, the company had to pay its own rent and supply its own fuel. In the same year the twelve piece Hickory Brass Band was organized with Joseph Inninger as Bandmaster. Hickory Engine Company won many silver trumpets in hand pumping contests with out-of-town fire fighters.

In October, 1896, on the eve of the McKinley-Bryan election, Hickory received an unexpected ovation in New York. The members of the company went over to the headquarters of the Mazeppa Company at Thirty-fourth Street and Ninth Avenue to bring home a hose carriage purchased there. With great interest New Yorkers watched the Jerseyites pulling their new equipment along Thirty-fourth Street thinking it was an election parade. When the volunteers returned with their apparatus, the Township Committee and the populace gave them a grand reception—fireworks and a general good time. Hickory moved into their new headquarters on Hudson Avenue near Sixty-sixth Street on May 29, 1913.

During the summer of 1896, both Empire Hook and Ladder Company and Hickory Engine Company fought valiantly side by side in the stubborn Peter Cooper Glue Factory⁴ fire on the waterfront with the assistance of the Wheeler and Wilcox Lard Refinery Fire Brigade. Although the battle was a losing one because of inadequate hose facilities, the old Gregory homestead and the plant of the Union Granite Company to the south survived the conflagration because a gentle south wind was blowing.

On the fifth of October, 1896, at four o'clock in the morning, a great waterfront fire broke out in the old White Brewery⁵ at the Guttenberg town line. Union Township's first horse-drawn steamers responded to the call, helping the Guttenberg volunteers in a vain attempt to save the massive frame structure which had been a prominent landmark since 1855. Nothing remained but a part of its chimney and the foundation walls. A number of frame dwellings in the immediate vicinity were badly damaged or completely destroyed.

On September 7, 1914, Empire and Hickory celebrated their silver anniversary in appropriate fashion. A silver anniversary booklet marking the occasion also heralded the organization of the present West New York Fire Department.



Hickory Engine Company Number One and Headquarters

This picture was taken on November 4, 1891. Standing, left to right, are: Charles Schittig, Sr., Fred Ackermann, Charles Wilse, John Scherer, Frank Lorch, Levi Rome, John Noble, Eugene Cole, James Wolfe, Gottlieb Haller, William Moon, John Fitzpatrick, Emil Stahl, and Eugene Stahl. Seated, left to right, are: Louis Koehler, Louis Scheider, Richard Stanton, John Eagleson, Frank Ryan, Rudolph Kunze, Henry Kuhn, James Furlong, Michael Furlong, Jr., George Kuberstein, Joseph Franz, Richard Organ, Michael Henry, Henry Kore, Hermann Meckert, and Robert B. Mill.

In addition to the pioneer companies other fire fighting organizations were established.

Liberty Hose Company Number One was organized on February 9, 1890 at John Burkart's Hall on Sixty-first and Jefferson Streets. On April 22, 1890, this company purchased the hose carriage of Liberty Hose Company Number Seven (Big Seven) of Paterson, New Jersey and on the same evening adopted that name.

Excelsior Engine Company Number Two was officially recognized by the Township Committee in May, 1891. Its hose carriage was purchased from the Hoboken Fire Department through the efforts of Ord Darling and Garret Fink. The company moved into the old frame school house of District Number Ten in September, 1892. In April, 1896 a horse-drawn steamer was acquired from the City of New York, and in September of the following year Excelsior Engine Company took possession of its new headquarters on Polk Street. This building is now the Exempt Firemen's Association⁶ Hall.

Enterprise Hose Company Number Three was organized on July 6, 1901 as an independent company with ten charter members, and in the following year was recognized by the Town Council of West New York. The company protected the Dallytown section in the southern part of the town. Its headquarters were on Fifty-first Street between Bergenline and Palisade Avenues.

Hudson Hose Company Number Four was organized on March 4, 1906, with Chief Ernest G. Beckert as foreman. The fire house of this company is at Sixty-sixth and Jackson Streets.

Monroe Hose Company Number Five, organized in April, 1909 in the back room of a store, was recognized by the town of West New York in the following month. In the beginning, the company had no apparatus but helped the other established companies. For a time, company headquarters was in a barn at Broadway and Sixty-first Street. On June 1, 1913, these volunteers took possession of their brick headquarters on Buchanan Place.

On May 15, 1915, West New York's first paid fire department was organized⁷ with a Chief Engineer and twenty-five men divided into four

companies. Ernest G. Beckert, the present Chief has headed the department since that time, when the first motorized equipment was purchased. Today, the remaining volunteers meet periodically in the headquarters of the Association of Exempt Firemen. For this purpose Architect William Mayer remodeled the old fire house of Excelsior Engine Company on Polk Street. The fire fighters of today with their modern apparatus and specialized training are second to none in the county.

* * * * *

In the early days of Union Township, the scattered settlers had to provide their own police protection. It was not unusual that a property owner possessed a faithful dog and a good rifle or revolver to protect his homestead from intruders. The first constable mentioned was Charles Wellmann who was sworn in at the County Court House in the late Sixties. As the years rolled by and the population grew, local police protection was organized with John S. Darling as head of the constabulary. On April 20, 1894, *The Observer* published an abstract from the minutes of the newly elected Township Committee. Chairman James Bowe announced the selection of Patrick Cannon, a member of the Committee, as Chief of Police and the appointment of Daniel Coakley as Sergeant. During this meeting, former police officers were instructed to turn in their badges and eighteen "specials" were appointed⁸. In those days the "specials" who were considered part-time workers received no fixed salaries, but were paid on the basis of arrests made.

At a meeting held two weeks later, the Township Committee, on the recommendation of Committeeman John Scherer, appointed another *extra* "special", Louis Graves, (Graff?) as official gravedigger" for dogs! This most unusual action was taken because certain individuals, whose names were not disclosed, had made a practice of bringing dead canines into town for burial in order to obtain the established bounty of one dollar for each interment. Since the canine population of the Township had not decreased materially during the weeks which preceded this action, the problem was brought to Scherer's attention by Treasurer William H. Schmidt, who was legally obligated to pay the burial fees. Schmidt, who had almost been buried under an avalanche of bills, threw up his hands in disgust and exclaimed, "Some people are trying to make a dog or horse

heaven of West New York!"¹⁰ Graves' modest offer to perform the last rite at fifty cents per "pup" seemed to be the only reasonable solution to the vexatious problem, and he received his appointment forthwith.

On April 5, 1895, the Township Committee published among the legal notices in *The Observer*, an ordinance creating a police force and fixing rates of pay. This ordinance, however, did not help to settle a quarrel between some of the "specials" and Recorder Collins. When an arrest was made by the Niles Avenue "cops" and the culprits were haled into court, a suspended sentence was frequently granted, thereby depriving the officers of their fee. The angry constables, bringing their grievance to the attention of the Town Fathers, were determined to have Collins ousted on charges of "non feasance". The matter was repeatedly referred to the "committee of the whole", but nothing resulted save threats and angry words.

At the time of incorporation, John E. Otis became West New York's first Chief of Police. He was so well liked by the "guardians of the peace" that on the day of the big incorporation parade they presented him with a handsome badge of office. (See page 100)

For many years Captain George Gleitsmann headed the West New York Police Force. Today, West New York's "finest" are under the leadership of Chief John F. Rooney. Both the Fire and Police Departments are under the jurisdiction of Director of Public Safety Ernest J. Modarelli.

The West New York Golden Jubilee

With great interest and enthusiasm the citizens of West New York are looking forward to the formal observance of their Golden Jubilee. For over a year, preparations have been in progress for this gala celebration which is to begin in the coming month.

On June 23, 1947, Mayor Wilbur J. McGowan appointed former Mayor Joseph Stiliz as General Chairman of the Golden Jubilee. During the summer months Mr. Stiliz outlined an ambitious program. On September 15th, this program was launched with the organization of the Golden Jubilee Committee and the creation of the first sub-committees, headed by more than forty chairmen. At the present time, the personnel of these committees, including the Advisory Board, numbers over one thousand.



The official emblem of the Golden Jubilee, designed by Mrs. Anne Fink, was selected from fifty-five competitive drawings in October, 1947. It symbolizes the progressive spirit from the "Gay Nineties" to the "Atomic Age" and at the same time portrays the festive mood of the occasion. It is also indicative of the work of the Golden Jubilee Committee in its steady progress along well-planned lines.

It is the hope of the General Chairman and his enthusiastic co-workers that the West New York

Golden Jubilee will be the greatest event ever experienced by the citizens of North Hudson. To this end, public-spirited citizens of the neighboring municipalities have generously participated in this great undertaking.

Prominent national, state, and municipal personages have been designated as Honorary Members of the Golden Jubilee. Plans have been completed for an exposition of West New York manufactured products, exhibits of community art and cultural development, a philatelic display, and folk dancing. Through the co-operation of the local clergy, religious services have been planned. Units of the United States Navy will be stationed at West New York's waterfront, and the Nation's arms of defence will participate in the "Parade of Parades" which will close the Jubilee on October 2nd.

The entire program has been conceived and developed to emphasize the progress of West New York over the half-century of its incorporation in contrast with the humble beginnings in 1898. The Golden Jubilee Committee, West New Yorkers, and neighboring townsfolk seek the realization of the General Chairman's prediction: "The nation and our state will long remember West New York—the Golden Jubilee Town—where civic pride runs high."

Notes and Comments

"Half Moon's" Haven

- 1 Bruce, *The Hudson*, p. 18; Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 6.
- 2 *New York Historical Society Collection*, N. S. I, 331; Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 6.
- 3 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1295.

Haunt of the Red Man

- 1 Winfield, *Land Titles*, p. 6.
- 2 The name "Swannekins" is derived from "Schwonnack" ("salt people") i.e. "white men from beyond the sea." Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 27.

Bergen Line

- 1 Winfield, *Land Titles*, p. 8.
- 2 *ibid.*, p. 151.

Bergen Woods

- 1 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 70; Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 935 ff.
- 2 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 152.
- 3 *ibid.*, p. 320.

"Mad Anthony" and the Poet-Spy

1 This episode, together with André's poem was first related by Lossing in *The Hudson from Wilderness to the Sea* (1866). It was developed and documented by Winfield, (*Hudson County*) in 1874. In 1880, Winfield wrote a more fully documented account in *Magazine of American History V.*, and in 1884 in Shaw's *History of Essex and Hudson Counties*. A posthumous account by the same author appeared in an illustrated reprint edited by William Abbatt under the title: *The Block-House by Bull's Ferry*, in 1904.

2 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 979. The Dey Mansion in Wayne Township, New Jersey, was built about 1740. It was the home of Col. Theunis Dey in 1780, when Washington occupied it as his field headquarters while the Continental Troops were encamped in the vicinity of Passaic Falls, at Paterson. It adjoins the entrance to the Passaic County Golf Course in Preakness Valley Park, one of the units of the Passaic County Park System comprising 1,200 acres.

3 Taylor, *Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen*, p. 327.

4 "Light Horse Harry" Lee was elected Governor of Virginia in 1792. Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1153.

5 *ibid.*, p. 986.

6 *ibid.*, p. 985.

7 Lossing, *The Hudson*, pp. 441-447; Winfield, *Hudson County*, pp. 171-183; Winfield, *The Block-House by Bull's Ferry*, pp. 17-32. The original MS. is in the possession of the Drexel Institute, Philadelphia. A facsimile page is reproduced in the last mentioned work on page 18.

8 Washington used the De Wint House at Tappan for his headquarters. He did not witness the execution or the erection of the gallows, but requested that the shutters of his room be closed on October 2, 1780, the day of André's execution. The De Wint House with its original shutters is still standing today. In November, 1932, it was purchased by the Freemasons of New York State and is now known as the Washington Masonic Shrine.

Before his execution André was kept prisoner in the "76 Stone House." This old tavern near the De Wint House was actually built in 1755 and is still standing in the heart of Tappan. On the hill behind it, enclosed by a circular railing, is a stone monument which marks the place of André's execution.

9 Wilstach, *Hudson River Landings*, p. 302. This recurrent assertion is questioned by William Abbatt who edited Winfield's *The Block-House by Bull's Ferry*. In a footnote on page 31 of that work Abbatt makes the following comment: "It has been said that Wayne was brigadier of the day when André was taken. This was not so. Huntington had that post (MS. Am. O. B.); nor was Wayne of the board that pronounced on his fate. A biographer however tells us that he was delivered to Wayne's keeping at Tappan. Another error."

10 On the day before his death, André appealed to Washington by letter, requesting to die as a soldier. N. P. Willis rendered this sentiment into verse. (See Appendix I.)

11 Thatcher's Journal gives the only recorded eye-witness account of the execution. It was reproduced by A. Levasseur, *Lafayette in America*, pp. 105-107. Levasseur was Lafayette's private secretary, who accompanied him on his journeys in America in 1824 and 1825.

12 *Westchester and Putnam Republican*, quoted from Bolton, *History of Westchester County* (Second edition), p. 321.

13 Winfield, *Land Titles*, pp. 224, 234; Harvey, *Genealogical History*, p. 298.

Bullserry Road

1 Hoebuck (Hoboken) is derived from hobocan hackingh, "tobacco pipe" ("land of the tobacco pipe"). See Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 14.

2 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 962.

3 *ibid.*, p. 988; Winfield, *Land Titles*, pp. 154-155.

Tory and Patriot

1 Eaton, *Jersey City and Its Historic Sites*, p. 58.

2 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 152.

"Three Pigeons" on the 'Pike

1 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 149.

2 *ibid.*, p. 152.

3 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 977.

4 For a facsimile reproduction of McLane's account see W. H. Richardson and W. P. Gardner's *Washington and "The Enterprise against Powles Hook,"* p. 35.

On November 21, 1903, the Paulus Hook Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a thirty-one foot obelisk at the intersection of Washington and Grand Streets, Jersey City, to commemorate Major Lee's daring enterprise. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, grandson of Major Henry Lee as guest of honor on that occasion, delivered a commemo-

rative address at the Union League Club after the unveiling of the monument. On the memorial shaft just above its six foot base was a tablet bearing the following inscription: "Erected November 21, 1903, by Paulus Hook Chapter, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, to commemorate the battle and capture of Paulus Hook by Major Henry Lee, August 19, 1779." (For details of the ceremonies and Gen. Lee's speech see the *Evening Journal*, November 23, 1903.)

About fifteen years ago the monument was destroyed when a heavy truck knocked it from its pedestal. The historic site remained without a marker until last May, when a bronze tablet was unveiled at Washington and York Streets. This is bedded in a granite shaft which was erected through the joint efforts of the Jersey City Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Provident Institution for Savings. Edgar Williamson, State President of the S. A. R., unveiled the monument on May 20, 1948. The tablet bears the English translation of the Latin citation of the obverse of Lee's Congressional Medal of Honor and reads as follows: "Notwithstanding rivers and entrenchments, Major Harry Lee, with a small band conquered the foe by warlike skill and prowess, and firmly bound by his humanity those, who had been conquered by his arms. In memory of the conflict at Paulus Hook, August 19, 1779—Jersey City Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution."

5 The insertion is the author's. The Zabriskie House (Steuben House), headquarters of the Bergen County Historical Society, is at New Bridge (River Edge, New Jersey). From this house Lee began his expedition against Paulus Hook.

6 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 160.

7 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 983.

8 *ibid.*, p. 981.

9 Townsend, *The Home Afloat, or the Boy Trappers of the Hackensack*, p. 8.

10 Garry Day's assistants were: Enoch Greenleaf, Egbert Post, Peter Vincent, and William Young. See Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1283.

11 Du Bois, B., *In the Days of Plank Roads and Toll Gates*, p. 19.

12 The Plank Road Chapel of Grove Church stood at the present site of the Hudson Trust Company in Union City.

13 Liber of Deeds 585, p. 533. On Thomas H. McCann's Map C. of the property belonging to James H. Symes in New Durham, Township of North Bergen (May 7, 1894), the Three Pigeons Hotel was located on the triangular plot, bounded by the present Bergen Turnpike (Hackensack Plank Road) on the south, Forty-third Street (Main Street) on the north, and Grand Avenue on the east.

An Affair of Honor

1 For the origin of the name "Weehawken," see Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 51; Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1310.

2 Alexander Hamilton's eldest son Philip was mortally wounded on this same ground in a duel with George I. Eacker on November 23, 1801.

3 Richardson, *Jersey City*, p. 21.

4 The pistols of Hamilton and Burr are in the custody of the Bank of Manhattan Company. They were acquired from the descendants of John B. Church. (*Burroughs Clearing House*, Vol. 32, No. 5, February, 1948.)

5 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 223. This old marker is now in the museum of the New York Historical Society. (See Appendix II.)

6 Chief of Police Edward J. Kirk of Weehawken, who has compiled an interesting history of Weehawken illustrated by the late Grant Wright, supplied this information.

7 This monument, a bust of Hamilton surmounting the boulder, was despoiled by vandals in the late 1920's. A new bronze bust was placed over the boulder in 1935.

Fulton's Folly

- 1 Buckman, *Old Steamboat Days on the Hudson River*, pp. 37-52.

"A-hunting We Must Go!"

- 1 Harvey, *Genealogical History*, p. 340.
- 2 Winfield, *Land Titles*, pp. 190 and 199.
- 3 Harvey, *Genealogical History*, p. 340.
- 4 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1296.
- 5 Bolton, *Westchester County*, p. 274.
- 6 Mack, *The Palisades of the Hudson*, p. 29; Gilman, *The Story of the Ferry*, a typewritten account containing 75 illustrations, gives the complete story. Only three copies were made. A printed edition of 53 pages containing 16 illustrations appeared on June 16, 1903. (Otto Hufeland, *Westchester and Bronx Counties*, Publications of the Westchester County Historical Society, VI, 1929.)
- 7 Liber of Deeds 8, p. 453.
- 8 Harvey, *Genealogical History*, p. 341.

Old Weehawken Ferry

- 1 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1296.
- 2 *National Cyclopedia of American Biography V*, p. 208.
- 3 Winfield, *Land Titles*, p. 128.
- 4 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1296.
- 5 The Wehawken here referred to was entirely within the present boundaries of West New York and is not to be confused with Weehawken Township, our southern neighbor, incorporated March 15, 1859.
- 6 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1296.

"Thy Woods and Templed Hills"

- 1 Halleck wrote this poem in 1830. He was Vice-President of "The Authors' Club" of which Washington Irving was President.
- 2 Miss Anne McKeoun supplied much of this information.
- 3 Edison's incandescent lamp had not yet been invented.
- 4 *Hudson County Democrat-Advertiser*, June 19, 1886.

Oak Cliff

- 1 Taylor, *Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen*, p. 97. The most complete account of Gregory's career is to be found in the *Evening Journal* (Jersey City), December 9, 1874.
- 2 Liber of Deeds 5, p. 109.
- 3 Liber of Deeds 107, p. 558.
- 4 Liber of Deeds 222, pp. 271-283.

5 The "switch-back" is clearly shown in Hopkin's, *Combined Atlas of the State of New Jersey and the County of Hudson* (1873), p. 145.

6 Liber of Deeds 222, p. 285.

7 Liber of Deeds 176, p. 252.

8 Liber of Deeds 176, p. 254.

9 Liber of Deeds 189, p. 272.

10 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* II, p. 1298.

11 *Evening Journal*, January 27, 1875.

12 Garret A. Hobart of Paterson, New Jersey, was Vice-President during McKinley's first administration from 1897 to 1900.

13 New York Supreme Court, *Conrad N. Jordan, Trustee, et al., against the Midland Terminal and Ferry Company, and others. Summons and Complaint*, 1875. (In N. Y. Public Library.) Jordan later became Treasurer of the United States from 1885-1887.

14 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County*, I, p. 503; Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* I, p. 196.

Rivalry along the River

1 This was a mortgage to the United States Trust Company, dated August 5, 1881, to cover an issue of bonds. Liber of Mortgages 150, p. 153.

2 The West Shore and Ontario Terminal Company was formerly known as the Open Cut and General Storehouse Company, a merger and consolidation of the old National Stockyard Company and the Midland Terminal and Ferry Company.

3 Liber of Deeds 395, p. 287.

4 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* I, 201; Hopkins, *Atlas* of 1873, p. 145, shows the lands in Union Township.

5 The Monitor Park tract was conveyed by the West Shore Railroad and the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad to the Guarantee Trust Company on July 13, 1901. (Liber of Deeds 782, p. 464.) The Guarantee Trust Company conveyed the lands to the West New York Improvement Company on July 26, 1901. (Liber of Deeds 788, p. 170.)

6 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* I, p. 202.

7 The smoke ventilator of the tunnel is behind the Roosevelt Diner on Forty-eighth Street.

8 Clifton, the estate of James Brown, was the former name for the northern part of Weehawken Township. The southern part was known as Highwood, the estate of James Gore King.

9 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* I, p. 201.

10 In 1925, the West New York Ferry Company, capitalized at \$125,000, was incorporated with Charles Singer, Jr., as President; John Lauterbach, Vice-President; and Percy Limouze, Secretary and Treasurer. Plans were made to reestablish local service to Twenty-third Street, New York. Although many local residents favored this move, the project never materialized. See *The New York Times*, July 11, 1925.

11 The route from New York to Greenbush, opposite Albany, and the extension to Troy was originally known as The Hudson River Railroad. Service was begun to Peekskill on September 29, 1849. See *The Hudson River and the Hudson River Railroad* (1851), p. 12. On May 21, 1869, "Commodore" Cornelius Vanderbilt, father of William

11. Vanderbilt, consolidated the road with his New York and Harlem Railroad, and since that time it was known as the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad. Chauncey M. Depew became attorney for the New York Central in that year, and succeeded William H. Vanderbilt as president in 1885.

12 On June 17, 1884, Theodore Houston, Vice-President of the West Shore and ex-Judge Horace Russell were appointed receivers by United States Circuit Court Judge John T. Nixon. (Liber of Deeds 391, p. 645.)

13 H. C. Brown, *The Elegant Eighties*, Valentine's Manual (New Series) 1927, p. 119.

14 *The New York Times*, July 27, 1885.

15 Liber of Deeds 411, p. 451.

16 *The New York Times*, November 25, 1885.

Little Old West New York

1 See inset on map.

2 Winfield, *Land Titles*, p. 252.

3 The North Bergen section of this map is reproduced in this history. The boundaries of modern West New York are superimposed by heavy black lines.

4 This map is filed at the Hudson County Court House.

5 *Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen*, p. 428.

6 *Hudson County*, p. 331.

7 *Genealogical History*, p. 432.

8 This indicates the early popularity of the name West New York as compared with the legal name Union Township.

9 The "Jungles" in those remote days was the name given that romantic hillside of North Bergen, west of the Hudson Boulevard and south of Sixty-first Street overlooking the Hackensack Meadows. This picturesque settlement contained ultra-modest dwellings, made of piano boxes and packing cases covered with tar paper and equipped with the most primitive facilities. Here the poor population lived and the territory was overrun by ubiquitous and omnivorous goats. In 1938, the "Jungles" were wiped out completely by the Federal Housing Administration and replaced by the modern real estate development known as Meadowview Village.

10 Mechler Street was named after Peter Mechler; Maackens Street received its name from Henry F. Maackens, father-in-law of James H. Symes.

11 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1297.

12 Bergenwood Road was a later designation for Dallytown Road, now Hudson Boulevard.

13 Other early inhabitants of West New York in the late Sixties and early Seventies included: J. Abel, Stephen Algaier, Anton Andras, F. Aspden, J. Baker, Gabriel Bayerlein, N. Bergh, G. M. Berle, F. Brickmann, K. Burkland, A. Duhr, Edward Earle, George Ellwein, F. Haas, Andreas Hildebrandt, F. Hittmann, Jacob Iffert (father of late Mayor Frank Effert), N. Jury, B. Katzmeyer, F. Kloppenberg, G. Kuegel, H. Lalemann, John Lick, S. Maloney, Robert McPherson, C. Menckel, F. Meyer, E. Michel, Ferdinand Muller,

(in later years, builder of Eldorado Castle and Amphitheatre), William Noll, T. J. Oehler, John Oetjen (for many years school trustee and member of the Union Township Committee), Charles Pfeffer, F. Pfebe, G. Pirgold, J. Protheen, C. Puhl, D. Schaefer, John Scholt, H. Schroeder, F. Schumacher, F. Seidel, F. Stockhaus, A. Waser, C. Wellmann, John White, M. Woller, and H. Yhlen. (Hopkins, *Combined Atlas of the State of New Jersey and the County of Hudson*, pp. 140-141.)

14 *ibid.*, p. 140.

15 See the brochure, *Dedication of Public School Number Six*, January, 1917, p. 60.

Weehawken Village

1 Niles was a member of the legislative committee on the impeachment of New York's Tweed Ring judges. For an outline sketch of his career see *The New York Times* and *The Tribune*, October 31, 1900.

2 The large number of "Places" running north and south between Sixtieth and Sixty-second Streets have their origin in the survey. See *Map of Building Lots at Weehawken belonging to William W. Niles* by B. and D. E. Culver, filed at the Hudson County Court House; see also Hopkins, *Atlas of 1873*, p. 140.

3 Among the early residents of Weehawken Village were: Campion, Chambers, E. J. Curly, J. S. Eliot, Edward Gregg, Hanna, James Hannon, Elias Kenyon, Thomas Kerlady, John McAlary, B. McCarthy, James McDonald, John Noble (Union Township's first fire chief), Thomas Rodgers and John Wiley. (Hopkins, *Atlas of 1873*, p. 140.)

4 For this information the writer is indebted to Miss Anne McKeoun.

5 John J. McKeoun's daughter Anne was for many years a much respected teacher in the West New York schools.

6 At the end of the Golden Nineties "The Cinders" below the hill was abandoned and a baseball diamond set up at Monitor Park. In 1903, the famous North Hudsons played ball here. (See Appendix III.) After Monitor Park was divided into streets John McGowan took his team to play at the old Guttenberg race track for a short period. Baseball was also played on a diamond located on the present site of the Municipal Building.

In 1912, the old Huckleberry Swamp was filled in. This was on the present site of Miller Stadium, named after former Mayor Richard J. Miller, "Father of the Playgrounds". Wilbur McGowan (Mayor of West New York) and John E. Otis (the present Commissioner of Parks and Playgrounds and Director of the "Hub") had bleachers erected in the new ball park. Until 1928, Mayor McGowan and Commissioner Otis sponsored baseball at Miller Stadium.

Tower Hill

1 Tower Hill was originally on the land of Jacob Newkirk who conveyed it to John Van Wagenen on April 24, 1773. It remained in the Van Wagenen family until the heirs conveyed it to Louis Becker in 1843. (Winfield, *Land Titles*, p. 253.)

2 For these reminiscences the writer is grateful to Miss Mary Bickhard, daughter of Conrad Bickhard, a pioneer settler of West New York.

3 The Melrose obituaries in *The Southern Reporter* (Selkirk, Scotland) March 28, 1901, and the *Grove Church Endeavor* March, 1901, contain excellent biographical material.

4 In the New York Public Library is a large folio collection containing representative landscapes and a short biography of the artist, a gift of his son-in-law, the late Rev. Dr. William Scott Watson.

5 Melrose entries are listed in the annual exhibition catalogs for 1868, 1869, 1870, 1872, 1879 and 1882.

6 *Daily Dispatch*, February 25, 1901.

7 *The Evening News* (Hoboken), September 1, 1892. Louis Kennel, technical adviser to the Golden Jubilee float committee, studied art and perspective under George Melrose. He has designed and staged the Macy Day and Bamberger parades.

8 *The Observer*, May 2, 1900.

9 *Hudson Observer*, July 21, 1921.

10 In 1890, Dr. Watson reported the following: "This manuscript was stored away probably for centuries, with many others, in a room of the temple at Nablus. We know that it was there in 1860, for Dr. Rosen, in an article in the journal of the German Oriental Society in 1864, says that it, with other treasures of the Samaritan synagogue in Nablus, was shown by the High Priest Amram to two Europeans, who visited that city in 1860, as a reward for some special services that they rendered him.

"The genuineness of the manuscript is attested, besides the evidence of the cryptographic date, by a marginal note of the High Priest Amram, who states that he presents the leaves to the son of his uncle, Jacob, who succeeded him in the priesthood and is the present priest. Amram speaks of the leaves as having been written in A. H. 35."

The cryptogram read as follows: "I, Jacob, the son of Israel, the son of Joseph, the son of Mar, the priest in the city of Damascus, wrote the holy hand for the elder and the stay and the pillar, Joseph, the son of the elder, and the stay and the pillar Ishmael, of the children of Saginah, in the year thirty-five of the kingdom of Ishmael. And praise to be to God." (*New York Sun*, August 20, 1890; *The Observer*, August 22, 1896.)

11 Dr. Watson's coin collection, gathered during his sojourn in Syria, was far more extensive than many public collections. The oldest coins in the strictly Judean series were two of Simon Maccabaeus, bearing the date of the "fourth year," which corresponds with 135 B.C. His coins of Syria were much older than these, his Phoenician series going back nearly 2,300 years to about 400 B.C. The issues of the mints of the Herodian family, Herod the Great, Herod Archelaus, and Herod Agrippa, were also represented as also the coins of the procurators who governed Judea under the Emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius and Nero. Probably the specimens most interesting to the general reader were those of the King who was reigning in Jerusalem when Christ was born, and those of Pontius Pilate before whom He was brought for sentence. (*Jersey City Herald*, December 22, 1894.)

Upper Dallytown

1 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* II, p. 1297.

2 The petition was signed by Malachi Cannon, Henry Grimm, Frederick Kramer, John Pahl, Michael P. Wallace, George Hues, Henry Ullrich, William Elliot, Daniel S. Rooney, Fred Hohmann, Michael Furlong, John Noe, Heinrich Noll, Thomas Purdee, Christopher Wade, and George Fischer. (Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* II, p. 1297.)

3 Hopkins, *Atlas* (1873), p. 144.

4 Residents on this narrow street were C. Sheehan, J. Weimer, J. Crawley, J. Caukwell, Mrs. Flood and Ellen Ryan. *ibid.*, p. 144.

Hudson County Park

1 For many years Hudson County Park was known as Clee's Park. In later years the park house was under the management of Ferdinand Tschupp.

2 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1298.

3 Mr. Frank Steiger, a lifelong resident on Dallytown Road, supplied this interesting anecdote.

4 This gang was allied with the "Mushrat Gang" which had similar objectives. *The Observer*, September 26, 1895.

5 The "growler" was a can in which beer was bought by measure.

Dallytown Tallyho

1 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1257.

2 *ibid.*, p. 1259.

3 Guttenberg Post Office was established in 1874 with Adolph E. Birkenstock as postmaster. *ibid.*, p. 1271.

4 *Evening Journal* (Jersey City), January 25, 1875.

5 *ibid.*, January 23, 1875; cf. Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 165.

6 *The Observer*, February 7 and 8, 1894.

7 *The Marker*, Vol. 5, No. 2, September, 1946. "The North Hudson County Railway," by Edward T. Francis and George H. Walrath.

8 For a complete description of the Eldorado viaduct and elevators see the *Street Railway Journal*, March, 1892.

9 John Hillric Bonn made the first trip on the elevators with company officials and guests on October 23, 1891, three weeks before his death. (Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County*, I, p. 506.)

Eldorado

1 "Bert" Prentice, a resident of North Hudson for more than sixty-five years, supplied this interesting anecdote. He was employed at Eldorado for a number of years.

2 *The Evening News* (Hoboken), July 10, 1891.

3 *The Observer*, May 4, 1894.

4 Bitter created the model for the equestrian statue of Franz Siegel on Riverside Drive, the statue of Henry Hudson at Spuyten Duyvil, and modeled many other fine statues for the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

5 *The Observer*, November 4, 1898.

6 In 1894, the Guttenberg steam line was extended to Fort Lee. A special excursion was run for the officials of the line. (*The Observer*, May 11, 1894.) The company originally planned to extend the road into Rockland County as far as Nyack, New York.

It was electrified in 1895 and continued as the "Palisade" car line along the old Public Service right-of-way east of Hudson Avenue. The Palisade line ran via Palisade Junction to Fort Lee and Coytesville. Today, this route is covered by the Palisade Bus, Number 23.

7 In 1902, the Fifth Cavalry Division from Washington, D. C. pitched camp with about 150 horses in wooded Monitor Park for about a week. They came to West New York for the unveiling of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on Riverside Drive, May 30, 1902.

"They're off at the 'Gut'!"

1 *Jersey Observer* (Jubilee Edition), February 7, 1942.

2 *The New York Times*, April 4, 1891.

3 *The New York Times*, April 22, 1891.

4 *Jersey Observer*, February 7, 1942.

5 The following "Sporting Odd" written by William H. Clark of New York appeared in *Collier's* on February 28, 1948:

"In December, 1887, at the old Guttenberg, New Jersey, race track, the fourth race was run in a snowstorm so blinding that the horses could hardly be seen in the parade to the post. Snow Bound, which had not won a race in two years, was quoted at 60 to 1 to win, and even at such odds there were few takers except for the jockey, Hughey Penney.

"The horses disappeared in the storm, and shortly afterward one horse came pounding down from the head of the stretch for a sensational win by twelve lengths. It was the underdog, Snow Bound, with money-winning Jockey Penney. Years later, Penney confessed how he had won. Instead of going to the barrier he had stayed at the head of the stretch until he heard the rest of the field rounding the back turn. Then he whipped Snow Bound and made the stretch run for the heavy-odds win."

6 Harvey, *Genealogical History*, p. 313.

7 Rev. Dr. I. W. Gowen of Grove Church led the crusade against the track in North Hudson. In Jersey City, Rev. Dr. J. L. Scudder depicted the old "Gut" and its adherents as follows: "Here in Hudson County we have pool selling in its worst form at the race track at Guttenberg. As the race tracks in the other parts of the state have been shut up, the gamblers have all come over here, and the rogues are congregated in one place. It is not necessary to go to the Rogue's Gallery to see the pictures of the criminals and law-breakers. We have only to go up to Guttenberg and we shall see all that we want and the originals." (*The New York Times*, April 20, 1891.)

8 The equipment from "Little Coney Island" was transferred to Palisades Amusement Park, which is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this year.

9 *Hudson Observer*, September 8, 1919.

Early Government

1 In January, 1861, the committee which drafted "An act to divide the Township of North Bergen" to present to the Senate, met in the home of John Hague in West Hoboken. (Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1307.)

2 *ibid.*, p. 1295.

3 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County*, I, p. 517.

4 Other Chairmen of Union Township were: Ord Darling, James Bowe, Major George Schwartz, and John E. Otis.

5 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County*, I, p. 518.

6 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* II, p. 1298.

7 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County*, I, p. 491.

8 In the early Nineties, Bergenline Avenue had a gloomy aspect after sundown. The few flickering carbon arc lights, which were spaced at far-flung intervals, cast grotesque, bluish shadows over the quarry holes where bullfrogs croaked incessantly at the passer-by. The Town Hall was not an easy place to find if an emergency arose. Finally, the town fathers agreed to install a green lantern over the door of Police Headquarters, but some delay was experienced before the final installation was completed.

Meanwhile, on an inky-black night in August, 1891, a wayfarer who had business to transact at the Hall wandered along the dark thoroughfare. Attracted by a greenish glow which he believed was emanating from the long-sought lantern, he over-reached his objective and, to his astonishment, found himself in August Einbeck's drug store! Since Einbeck also served as Town Recorder, he gave the stranger the right "dope."

Turf Fire and Cyclone

1 *The Observer*, October 7, 1895.

2 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties* II, p. 962.

3 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 200.

4 The course of Awiehacken Creek is indicated on the map.

5 *The Observer*, September 23, 1895.

Taurus Post Office

1 *The Observer*, May 7, 1896. It is difficult to establish the origin of this name; "Taurus" ("bull") may have had some connection with Bull's Ferry.

2 The new Post Office was officially dedicated on October 12, 1938, during the week of the observance of West New York's Fortieth Anniversary. For details of the growth and development see the souvenir brochure: *Fortieth Anniversary Celebration and Post Office Dedication*.

In 1898, Thomas Dobbs was appointed postmaster at Taurus and moved his office to Bergenline Avenue and Sixty-third Street. In 1902, free delivery was extended to West New York. About 1910, Guttenberg Branch of the Weehawken Post Office moved to Bergenline Avenue at Sixty-fifth Street, West New York. John Merritt was appointed postmaster at Weehawken Post Office in 1911, and, in 1913, the name of Guttenberg Branch was changed to West New York Branch, Weehawken Post Office. At this time Charles J. Thielemann became Superintendent. In 1915, Emil Groth was appointed postmaster, and in 1916 West New York Branch was moved to Sixty-first Street. On June 1, 1925, West New York became an independent office covering the towns of West New York, North Bergen, Guttenberg and Secaucus, with Herman H. Ahlers serving as postmaster until March 5, 1936, when the late Leo S. Swanwick was appointed. On January 15, 1938, Mrs. Madelyn Swanwick was appointed acting postmaster to fill the position vacated through the sudden death of her husband, on January 7th.

From Union to Unity

- 1 *The Observer*, March 3, 1898.
- 2 This building is now occupied by the Daylight Bakery.
- 3 Today, this bell is prominently displayed in front of the Municipal Building. It has a most unusual history, which was recorded on page 79 of the brochure issued at the dedication ceremonies of Public School Number Six: "The historic bell was cast in Troy, N. Y. in 1859. The bell was taken in Suffolk, Va. in 1862 by Comrade William F. Pfeffer, of the Twentieth New York Volunteer Infantry and shipped to his mother, then a resident of Union Hill, who some years later sold it to the school authorities of West New York where it served for years both as school and fire bell.



Old Bell Tower

"When the old wooden building, in which it did service years ago, gave way to modern structures, the old bell remained neglected and forgotten in the dust of the rickety belfry, a nesting place for birds, until brought forth from its obscurity by the patriotism of the Board of Education to give a lasting charm to this long to be remembered Decoration Day (1901). The shaft prepared as the permanent resting place of the bell is built of West New York's native blue stone, with base and cap stone, of gray granite. The granite slab in the face of the pedestal was presented for this occasion by Mr. William

Luckhardt. In the interior of the shaft is deposited a copper box, presented for the occasion by Mr. Sylvester Merkel, and containing documents and souvenirs, appropriate to the occasion. The following pledge was signed by all of the teachers and pupils in the West New York Schools, and sealed within the column:

" 'On this Memorial Day, 1901, I pledge never-failing devotion to the flag above us, and loyalty to the schools o'er which it floats.

" 'I will do all that I can for both, and will allow no one to do them an injury if I can prevent it.'

"The members of the Board of Education and the Councilmen and other officials affixed their names to the following sentiment:

" 'For the upbuilding of our Schools.'

and the papers were masoned within the monument."

The memorial tablet bore the following inscription:

"Dedicated May 30, 1901 to the Memories of the Rebellion of 1861-65. Taken in Suffolk, Va., 1862. To the Public Schools of West New York, N. J."

4 *The Observer*, March 1, 1898.

5 Of the 162 votes cast in the first district, 137 favored incorporation and 25 were opposed; in the second district 127 ballots were cast of which 111 favored and 16 were opposed. cf. *The Observer*, July 6, 1898.

Charter Day

1 The volunteer firemen had formed a committee consisting of two members from each company. On the committee were: Freeholder Ord Darling and Mayor John Otis of Empire Hook and Ladder Company, John Andes and Nicholas Hilts of Liberty Hose, Rudolph Kunze and Frank Ryan of Hickory Engine Company, and William ("Dutchie") Mayer and Fred Ritterhouse of Excelsior Engine Company. Ord Darling served as chairman.

2 It has been impossible to identify this West New York paper fully, because the right half of its masthead was missing. It was printed locally as Volume I, Number 2 under the date August 29, 1898. This weekly probably met the same fate as a local forerunner, *The Guttenberg and West New York Times*. On January 23, 1895, the *Hudson County Dispatch* printed the following interesting obituary: "*The Guttenberg and West New York Times*, after about six months, has succumbed to the inevitable and yielded up the ghost. It died peacefully of starvation. It is hinted that a few bold spirits are about to incubate another journalistic egg in the town, a circumstance which, if true, conclusively proves that the age of heroic undertakings has not yet entirely passed." The *Dispatch* and *Observer* also carried running accounts of the parade.

3 Peter Stilz was the father of Hon. Joseph Stilz, General Chairman of West New York's Golden Jubilee.

4 Mrs. Mathilda Brill Connell is a member of the Golden Jubilee Historical Committee.

5 Mrs. Anna Klein (née Ferguson) is Supervising Principal of the Guttenberg Public School.

6 The victory naval parade which marked the end of hostilities of the Spanish-American War (August 12, 1898), took place on August 21, 1898, one week before West New York's Charter Day Parade. See *The Observer*, August 22, 1898. Admiral Wat Tyler Cluverius, USN retired, a survivor of the U.S.S. Maine and President of Worcester Polytechnic Institute has been made an Honorary Member of the West New York Golden Jubilee. He served as an Ensign aboard the Maine.

7 The American Guard was a boys' military association, sponsored by the West New York School Trustees after the Spanish-American War. John Leseman, Otto Griesbach, and Charles Van Schalscha were its chief sponsors. Leaders of the group were Martin Battle, Charles Estes, and Dr. Charles Baudendistel. The American Guard gave exhibitions at school picnics and other social events. Boys, who later took an active part in World War I as commissioned and non-commissioned officers, received valuable training in this organization. These details were supplied by Major A. Einbeck.

8 Katherine Bickhard was the widow of Conrad Bickhard. Her youngest daughter Mary Bickhard is a member of the Golden Jubilee Historical Committee.

Parade of Progress

1 The Mayors following John E. Otis were: Dennis J. Murphy (1903-1905), Ord Darling (1906-1909), Richard J. Miller (1910-1913), Oscar L. Auf der Heide (later Congressman) (1914-1917), Joseph Stilz (1918-1921), Joseph V. McNeill (1922-1925), Frank Effert (1926-1931), Charles Daume (1931-1935), Joseph Stilz (1935-1943), John J. White (1943-1947); Wilbur McGown is the present Mayor. In 1931, the Commission form of government, consisting of five commissioners elected at large, was adopted, replacing the Mayor-Council form.

2 For many years the "Half Moon" was moored at Cohoes, N. Y. It could still be seen in 1930 with its dummy sailors aboard. The "Clermont" gradually rotted away in a shallow creek near the pier of the Hudson River Day Line at Kingston Point.

3 Members of this body included: Henry Leer, Thomas F. Ayling, Joseph Stilz, Joseph V. McNeill, James Filon, Otto Griesbach, Harry Gerolstein, Charles B. Herrmans, Sam Roth, Richard J. Miller, Charles F. Henry and many others. The present Board of Trade was organized in 1926 with about 300 members. Its present officials are: Robert Frolov, President; Abe Brown, First Vice-President; Joseph Imbelloni, Second Vice-President; Dr. Samuel Binder, Third Vice-President; Harvey Juneman, Executive Secretary and Arthur Einbeck, Treasurer.

4 In 1875, the Shuttle Pantograph embroidery machine was invented by Isaac Groebli, Franz Sauer and his son Adolph Sauer. In 1895, the modern automatic machine was perfected by Joseph Arnold Groebli. (See Appendix IV.)

5 This was the second unsuccessful attempt to bridge the Hudson to Manhattan. Previously, in 1891, Civil Engineer Joseph W. Balet had submitted plans to the War Department for a bridge to Eightieth Street, New York. The combination cable and cantilever span was to be 150 feet above highwater. Plans were approved by Acting Secretary Grant at Washington, and ground was broken at Guttenberg. The project, however, never passed this preliminary stage. *The Evening News* (Hoboken), December 21, 1891.

6 For a detailed description of the parade and other events of Prosperity Week see the *Hudson Observer*, September 22, 1915. In this parade, the West New York Fern Club, organized on March 8, 1915, was the largest organization in the line of march. The motto of the Fern Club is "To Have and To Share." Two of its charter members, Mrs. Rose Fischer and Mrs. Mattie Cirelli, are still very active. In December, 1918, Mrs. Minnie Trott and Mrs. J. L. French organized a Junior Club of 52 members. The Fern Club has just celebrated its 33rd anniversary.

7 The results of the voting at West New York showed that 1,064 favored consolidation and 1,354 were opposed. (Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County I*, p. 484.)

8 The Advisory Board for Registrants consisted of lawyers, doctors, teachers, and other professional men in West New York and Guttenberg.

9 From the great number engaged in Civilian Defense activities, Dr. Bader nominated John Cendo, Vincent McGuinness, Robert Parrott, Dr. Noah Myerson, Emil Klein, Frank Oleri, and Louis Brenner "for the Distinguished Service Cross of West New York as laid down in the Town Resolution of April 13, 1943." See *Report of the Commander and his Staff on Civilian Defense Activities*, February, 1945, p. 10. (Dr. Louis Bader, Vice-Chairman of the Golden Jubilee, died on August 23, 1948.)

10 Counselor Francis Castellano, the first Chairman of the West New York Rationing Board, was succeeded by Carleton Lebow. Nathan Richman served as secretary.

11 Painters' Local 377 (A. F. of L.) of Hudson County furnished the labor on this job gratuitously.

"Dear Old Golden Rule Days"

1 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1046 f. contains an excellent biography. Bonn's obituary appeared in *The Evening News* (Hoboken), November 17, 1891.

2 In April, 1871, under New Jersey school law, Hudson County was divided into seventeen school districts. Districts Nine and Ten were in Union Township. cf. Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II* p. 1121.

3 *ibid.*, p. 1256.

4 The writer wishes to thank Mr. Howard W. Reilly, Dr. Harold F. Tidwell, Mr. Carleton Lebow, Mr. James F. Martin, and Mr. John Courtney, members of the West New York Board of Education, for access to this interesting memento.

5 Other teachers in District Number Nine were: Patrick O'Connor (1867-1870), Mr. Crounce (1870-1875), James W. Phelan, later Vice-Principal of Union Hill High School (1875-1878), Patrick McElduff (1878-1881), Mary Lynch and Jennie D. Gros (1882-?). Until 1895 Philip Ward was principal in District Nine. He was succeeded by Mr. Roberts. In early days the brick school house of District Number Nine, erected in 1882, was known as the Weehawken School.

6 Brochure issued January 13, 1917, by the West New York Board of Education, *Public School Number Six Dedication Ceremonies*, p. 60.

7 Dickinson High School in Jersey City is named after William Leverett Dickinson. He was County Superintendent from 1867-1883 and City Superintendent from 1871-1883. (Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1134).

8 *Minutes of the Trustees of District Number Ten*, p. 1.

9 The foundation was laid by Thomas Bowe; the carpentry, plastering, and painting were done by George Sneath.

10 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1299.

11 A Mr. Flynn also taught in District Ten during this period. Other teachers included: J. W. Howland (1879-1882), Alexander Smith (1882-1884), Jere Fruttchy (1884-1886), George Steinson (1886-1887). Henry C. Opdyke served as first Supervising Principal from 1887-1892. He was followed by William M. Van Sickle (1892-1901), Gerald Gordon (1901-1906), Jared Barhite (1906-1910), and Holly W. Maxson (1910-1927). Harry L. Bain has been Superintendent of Schools since 1927.

12 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties II*, p. 1299.

13 Riesenberger's Hall was originally owned by Captain Ignatz Krobatsch. Many of the gala social functions of West New York and neighboring towns were held here. Members of the graduating class of June, 1896 were: Hilda M. Benson, Matilda Brill, Catherine R. Carroll, John A. Carroll, Jennie M. Darling, Annie L. Ferguson, Ellen N. Hardie, Emma Hardie, Anna R. McKeoun, and Emily Thourot. William M. Van Sickle was Supervising Principal. James H. Wolfe was President of the Board of Education in 1896, and H. F. Otis served as Clerk. Other members were Dennis J. Murphy, George A. Melrose, J. F. Lehing, John G. Wolf, A. Willaredt, R. Kunze, and W. J. Parkus.

14 Dr. Jared Barhite was a poet of considerable merit. Among his works were "Dalmaqua," a beautiful Indian legend centering about Lake Aowosting, "Musings and Sayings of Nature," and "Our Profession and Other Poems."

15 On June 15, 1917, the West New York Free Public Library was opened in the Municipal Building with a selection of 2,700 volumes. Under the supervision of Miss Gorton as Librarian and Miss Jennie Thompson as Assistant, the Library was a valuable adjunct to the new High School. In addition to its general function, the Library provided special branch work for the school. The facilities of the Library, whose registration was rapidly growing, were taxed to such an extent that it became necessary to erect a suitable building. The cornerstone of the Library opposite the Municipal Building was laid on September 9, 1922 by Trustee Elsie Klemm, the first woman official in West New York. Jennie Thompson was head librarian assisted by Miss M. Bendlin, Mrs. Dollman and Miss Rose Dilcher.

16 Miss Alice Halfpenny and Miss Edna Moreau are Deans of Girls; Louis Gerisch and John C. McGrath serve as Deans of Boys. Miss Borneman and the Guidance Department have instituted "Career Day" to assist students from Memorial and St. Joseph's in choosing their future vocations.

17 Rutgers University was represented at the convocation by President Robert C. Clothier and Deans Ernest E. McMahon and Norman C. Miller; West New York by Superintendent Harry L. Bain, Principal Elizabeth V. Borneman, John C. McGrath, and Mayor John J. White. (*Jersey Observer*, February 5, 1947.)

18 The "coronation" of the "King of the Jungles" took place in 1916 at a festive evening party and dance held at Hans Herr's "Castle" at Newkirk and Sixty-first Streets. This affair climaxed the annual picnic and outing of the "Jungle Boys" in Gooseberry Grove on the western slope of Bergen Hill. In the course of the afternoon preceding the "crowning," the "King" umpired a baseball game between the single men and the married men of the club. The ever genial and affable counselor treasured the gilded crown as a special trophy in his office, and often referred to his title with great pride.

Sherwood was not the only West New Yorker to be called "King of the Jungles." According to Hans Herr, the title was also conferred upon Sam Dippel and Al Runnei. The annual coronation was usually followed by a parade with the "King" leading the procession on horseback.

"Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul!"

1 Taylor, *Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen*. p. 429.

2 Grove Reformed Church, the oldest Protestant congregation in North Hudson, was organized on April 12, 1843, as the "Reformed Protestant Dutch Church at New Durham." Its founders originally belonged to the Reformed Dutch Church at the English Neighborhood (Ridgefield). The first pastor of "Old Grove" was Rev. Philip Duryee, D.D. The present church building, designed by Richard Upjohn the architect of Trinity Church, New York, was dedicated on September 27, 1847. The land and buildings of Grove Church were the gift of James Brown of Weehawken, a member of a Presbyterian Church in New York. A letter of appreciation to James Brown in behalf of the Classis of Bergen was written by Rev. J. Romeyn and Rev. V. V. Mabon. It read in part as follows:

"In the face of heaven, and before the eyes of all, 'beautiful for situation, and a joy'

like a sentinel upon his watch-tower, stands your 'Grove Church,' overlooking the region it was appointed to guard.

"We cannot refrain from giving expression to the grateful admiration you have won from us, and the deep affection which we feel for you." (Taylor's *Annals*, p. 383.)

3 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County* II, p. 125.

4 *ibid.*, p. 125. This building is now used by St. John's Slovak Catholic Church of which Rev. William Biskorovanyi is pastor.

5 Winfield, *Hudson County*, p. 413.

6 In the early 1900's, St. John's opened its Sunday School room on week days to provide additional space for overcrowded Number One School. Matilda Brill served as teacher in this annex.

7 A group of German settlers in West New York purchased a church building in Hackensack. This building was taken down, brought to West New York and rebuilt as Zion Evangelical Church. (cf. the historical sketch of Trinity Reformed Church in the brochure *Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two and Hickory Engine Company, Number One*, 1914.

8 Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties*; II, p. 1299.

9 *The Centennial of Grove Church*, p. 35.

10 In 1891, before he came to West New York, Father Berghold wrote *The Indians' Revenge or Days of Horror*, a stirring account of pioneer life among the Sioux Indians at New Ulm, Minnesota. He organized the Catholic congregation at New Ulm on January 10, 1869.

11 On the top of the steeple was a platform reached by a spiral stairway above the belfry. The platform, enclosed by an iron railing, was intended as an open air observatory—the highest point in West New York. It was reached by a door in the cupola which rested upon the center of the platform. The two bells weighed 1,200 and 1,400 pounds respectively.

12 On March 29, 1948, three memorial plaques were unveiled at St. Mary's Church—one in memory of Father Berghold, a second in memory of Monsignor Lill, and a third commemorating ten veterans of World Wars I and II who had made the supreme sacrifice.

13 Van Winkle, *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County* II, p. 125.

14 This convent has been recently modernized and now has a brick exterior.

15 Father Connor has composed a jubilee march in commemoration of West New York's Golden Jubilee.

16 Rev. Schoppe served St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Union Hill at the same time. Services were held in Union Hill in the morning and at West New York in the afternoon.

17 In addition to several books of religious instruction, Dr. Eickmann, West New York's senior pastor, is author of *Pilgrim Paul*, a life of the Apostle, and *The Evangel*, the life of Christ in the words of the Bible. Pastor Eickmann, my father, died on July 24, 1948, following a brief illness.

18 In the summer of 1899, Edward G. Meury, a student supply, conducted regular Sunday evening services. Mr. Robert W. Courtney followed Mr. Meury, and in the summer of 1902 Albert T. Broek took charge of the work until the arrival of Dr. Abram W. Hopper.

Fire Fighters and Bluecoats

1 The Charter members of Empire Hook and Ladder Company Number Two were: John E. Otis, John S. Darling, Ord Darling, Alexander J. Ackermann, George A. Melrose, Garret Fink, John Kammer, John C. Gerisch, George Gleitsmann, Thomas Greeley, Nicholas Mingst, Alphonse Thourot, Christian Bauer, and John Allen. (See p. 126.)

2 Garret Fink was chief until 1891. Other fire chiefs to modern times were: William Waller (1891-92), John Kammer (1892-94), Richard Stanton (1894-95), Anton Andras (1895-96), Jonathan Chadderton (1896-97), Roger Carroll (1897-1898), Christian Schmitt (1898-99), James L. Wolfe (1899-1900), Peter Stecklein (1900-01), Ernest A. Benz (1901-02), John Eagleson (1902-04), Leonard Wolf (1904-06), William Mayer (1906-08), John O'Shea (1908-10), John Lesseman (1910-12), James Lindsay (1912-14). Ernest G. Beckert has been chief since 1914.

3 Charter members of Hickory Engine Company were: Levi Rome (foreman), Conrad Ritter (assistant foreman), James Furlong (chairman) Josiah Graver, Rudolph Kunze, Frank Lorch, Richard Stanton, William A. Immich, G. C. Widemyer, Charles Schittig, William Rome, John Ritter, Adam Laurie, Daniel Hoger, John Hauser, Joseph Franz, Richard Organ, John Toole, W. Welsh, Ludwig Koehler, John Curles, Charles Berman, Louis Scheider, Christian Bauer, James H. Wolfe, Charles Miller, Bernard Carroll, Charles Kelbel, John Stout, Otto Habic, John Scherer, John Maloney, R. Rickert, M. Caufield, John Hornung, William Mayer and George Kuberstein.

4 The Peter Cooper Glue Factory was originally located in Long Island City. The plant was set up in West New York in 1891. At the time of the fire it was owned by ex-Mayor Edward Cooper, son of Peter Cooper of New York, and ex-Mayor Hewitt of New York. Total damage to the factory and neighboring property was estimated at \$110,000 (*The Observer*, July 13, 1896.) On May 18, 1896, another riverfront fire threatened Bindernagel's "Little Monte Carlo" at three o'clock in the morning. Firemen and deckhands from the ferry kept neighboring buildings wet until the local volunteers arrived (*The Observer*, May 18, 1896).

5 The White Brewery on the East Boulevard was located in the neighborhood known as Belle Vue. Originally, it was owned by Otto Koehler and Andrew Finck. Later, when Finck withdrew from the partnership, Woltze Kamena, a former accountant, became Koehler's partner, and the firm was known as Koehler and Kamena. (Shaw, *Essex and Hudson Counties*, II, p. 1270.) The White Brewery was eight stories high, only the last two being visible above the level of the Boulevard. A dance pavilion and beer garden was located on the bluff to the north. After the panic of 1873, the building housed a sporting club, and boxing matches and cock fights were staged there. In later years Fred Walker, brother of former Mayor Herman Walker, sponsored medicine shows with "Kickapoo Indians."

The great cellars extend in two levels under the cliffs. There are three tiers above and two below. The upper tiers extend about 60 feet and the lower about 130 feet. (*Hudson Dispatch*, May 1, 1947.) Since 1904, these old storage tunnels, still visible from the river, have been used for a mushroom farm operated by Camille De Winter, son of the farm's founder. In its heyday the White Brewery had steamboat connections with Spring Street, New York. The excursion boats "Only Son" and "Thomas E. Hulse" docked at the old landing owned by Commodore De Kay (See illustration p. 78).

6 The Association of Exempt Firemen was organized on December 27, 1898 at the headquarters of the Liberty Hose Company on Sixty-first Street. The "Exempts" took part in many parades, both locally and in the metropolitan area. In 1919, the historic bell (See footnote 3, p. 145) in front of the Municipal Building was dedicated by the Exempt Fire Department and in September, 1920 the firemen's monument on the east corner was unveiled after a local parade in which many volunteers from surrounding towns took part.

7 *Dedication Ceremonies, Public School Number Six*, p. 121.

8 These special officers were: A. Sharge, C. Schittig, Stewart Hamilton, G. Wolfe, Adam Smith, J. Durkin, William Duhne, William Ganley, J. Andes, J. Schimbler, Alexander Smith, P. Buckley, J. Connors, James Homung, L. Bohn, O. Turkowsky, J. Duane and George Lueck. In the following month, upon recommendation of Chief Cannon, Frank Crawley and Robert Taylor were also appointed as "specials."

9 *The Observer*, May 4, 1894.

10 *The Observer*, March 12, 1894.

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Appendix I

André's Plea

Nathaniel P. Willis rendered André's brave and dignified plea to Washington into this poetic form:

It is not the fear of death
That damps my brow;
It is not for another breath
I ask thee now;
I can die with a lip unstirr'd,
And a quiet heart—
Let but this prayer be heard
Ere I depart.

I can give up my mother's look—
My sister's kiss;
I can think of love—yet brook
A death like this!
I can give up the young fame
I burn'd to win;
All—but the spotless name
I glory in.

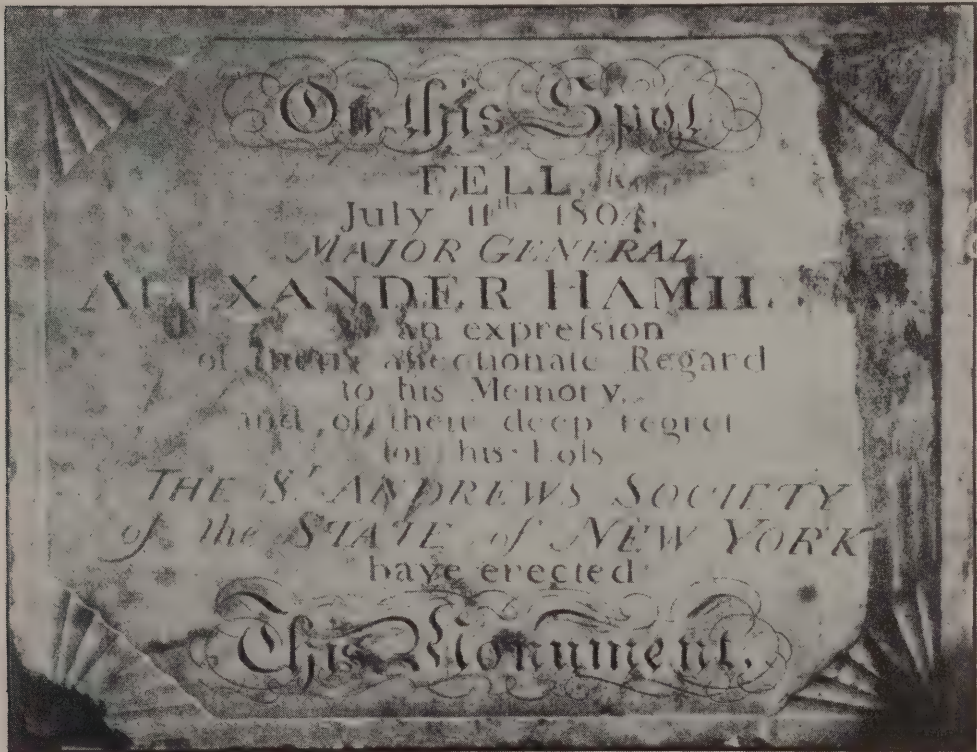
Thine is the power to give,
Thine to deny,
Joy for the hour I live,
Calmness to die.
By all the brave should cherish,
By my dying breath,
I ask that I may perish
By a soldier's death.

(cf. note 10, p. 135)

Appendix II

Hamilton's First Monument

"The plain marble slab which stood in the face of the monument is still preserved by a member of the King family. It is thirty-six inches long by twenty-six and a half inches wide and bears the following inscription: 'As an expression



Original Hamilton Memorial Tablet from an Artotype by Albert Bierstadt

of their affectionate Regard to his Memory and their deep regret for his Loss, the St. Andrew's Society of the State of New York have erected This Monument'.

"Quite a history attaches to this stone (graphically condensed by an old gardener of the King estate): 'It stood in the face of the monument for sixteen

years, and was read by thousands, but by 1820 the pillar had become an eyesore to the enlightened public sentiment of the age, and an agitation was begun in the public prints for its removal. It was not, however, organized effort, but the order of one man, that at length demolished the pillar. This man was Captain Deas, a peace-loving gentleman, strongly opposed to dueling and brawls, and on seeing a party approaching the grounds often interposed and sometimes succeeded in effecting a reconciliation. He became tired of seeing the pillar in his daily walks, and, in 1820, ordered his men to remove it and deposit the slab containing the inscription in one of the outbuildings of the estate. This was done. But a few months afterward the slab was stolen, and nothing more was heard of it until thirteen years later, when Mr. Hugh Maxwell, President of the St. Andrew's Society, discovered it in a junk shop in New York. He at once purchased it and presented it to Mr. James G. King, who about this time came into possession of the Deas property, where it has since been carefully preserved.'

"This mansion of Captain Deas, afterward known as the 'King House on the Cliff', was a stately residence where Washington Irving used to come and dream of his fair Manhattan across the river. It was also the headquarters of Lafayette, after the battle of Brandywine.

"The gardener also said: 'The river road beneath us is cut directly through the spot. Originally it was simply a narrow and grassy shelf close up under the cliffs, six feet wide and eleven paces long. A great cedar tree stood at one end, and this sandboulder, which we have also preserved, was on the other. It was about twenty feet above the river and was reached by a steep rocky path leading up from the Hudson, and, as there was then no road or path even along the base of the cliffs, it could be reached only by boats.'" (Bruce, *The Hudson*, p. 44 f.)
(cf. note 5, foot of p. 136)

Appendix III

Baseball in Monitor Park

"From a 'rube' crowd to one of the strongest baseball clubs in the country was the record made by the famous North Hudson baseball club—about 1903 or 1904. A Mr. Mills was first in charge of the North Hudsons, but later John J. McGowan [father of Mayor McGowan] took the boys in hand and drove them through a tough schedule of games, the majority of them going to the credit of the club. It was the first real representative team in West New York—made up entirely of the West New York boys and they cleaned up with everything in Hudson County, winning the pennant in the Amateur League at the time. This is remarkable considering that there were only approximately 5,000 inhabitants in West New York at the time and they competed with the pick of clubs from Hoboken and other parts of the county.

"It was also with this club that Harry Otis first discovered that he had 'something on the ball' and would make a better pitcher than a first baseman. They took him off first base one day when the regular flinger failed to appear and Harry got his first chance to work that southpaw of his. He continued to twirl sensational ball for the North Hudsons and in a few years he attracted the attention of some minor league scouts. After two years of excellent pitching in the tall bushes, Cleveland grabbed him. They sent Otis in to pitch the first day he joined the Cleveland team and he gave the White Sox a real beating. He won many games for Cleveland that season and was booked for the big show for many years. But his career was cut short at the end of that season—in the final game of the year—when something went wrong with a ligament in his arm. Harry tried everything to get that old wing back into shape, but the ligament wouldn't stay put.

"Another well-known player who worked with the North Hudsons was William Rosenfelder, known to baseball fans as 'Bill' Rose. This player also worked his way in the minor leagues but he was too temperamental to go any higher. George Reeves, the fiery-tempered outfielder, contributed much of the fighting spirit to the team. Reeves also saw minor league service.

"'Matty' McGuire, one of the mainstays of the team, another North Hudson boy, later showed 'em how to hit the ball with the O. L. G.'s in Hoboken. Oliver Gunderson, outfielder and second pitcher, made a fine record as a twirler in the Eastern Carolina League but is not playing the game now. 'Will' Scholp was a wonderful backstop, but quit playing when the team disbanded. William Mayer, who covered the initial sack, was one of the hardest sluggers, but quit the game many years ago. 'Izzy' Reeves, brother of George, was noted for his long distance clouts, but he put away his spiked shoes many years ago.

"Ira Dobbs, the quiet and serious-minded third baseman, was an all-around star and could wallop the pill plenty. 'Chappie' Mayer, younger brother of William, was only fourteen years old at the time he played with the North Hudsons and, at that time, was one of the sensations of baseball in the county." (From the *Hudson Dispatch*)

(cf. note 6, p. 140)

Appendix IV

The Schiffli Embroidery Industry

"A great advance has been made in embroidery since the days when women painstakingly worked for hours sewing threads into patterns for decorative purposes. Embroidery has emerged from the luxury brackets to take its place in the popular price ranges. The Schiffli embroidery machine has brought luxury to the masses.

"Home of the Schiffli machine and ninety per cent of all embroideries made in this country, is a cluster of towns situated on the banks of the Hudson River in northern Hudson County, often called the little St. Gall of America because it was from St. Gall that the original Swiss immigrants came, bringing the Schiffli machine with them. Now in North Hudson, the 428 manufacturers and their employees carry on in the tradition of the original Swiss and German embroidery makers who settled there 75 years ago.

"Not only have these descendants of the original settlers, and other skilled lace and embroidery makers who joined them, maintained the same high standard of fine craftsmanship, but their ingenuity and the use of the Schiffli machine have made possible a multitude of embroidery uses above and beyond fine lingerie trimming.

"The word Schiffli means 'little boat' and it is this little boat-like shuttle that produces lace or embroidery in width from 10 to 15 yards and in any conceivable type of design. The use of this shuttle has changed machine embroidery from a crude facsimile of handwork to a smooth finished product.

"Each Schiffli machine has from 682 to 1,020 needles, which make it possible to produce fine and elaborate details in appliqués and embroideries of all types on all kinds of fabrics that have the luxurious look of handwork, but without the prohibitive cost.

"On lingerie, versatile effects are achieved, in lace and net appliqués, combined embroidery and lace designs, net appliqués on bodices, necklines, shoulders, pockets and skirts.

"The machine also makes various types of fancy stitching and designs. New patterns are constantly developed in line with advance fashion trends.

"The Schiffli embroidery falls into two groups. One is the framework section which makes an outstanding contribution to slips and gowns because the patterns are worked on frames and the finished pieces are then attached to the garment

itself. The other type makes possible the elaborate trims which may be used in as many ways as fashion dictates. This is the yardage which can be made in various widths and in all fabrics, such as net, crepe, ninon, lace and nylon in all colors. Here, too, patterns vary from the simplest to the most elaborate.

"Perhaps the most important factor about the Schiffli is its versatility and adaptability, features which make it play an invaluable part in the production of fine lingerie. From detailed appliqués and simple scallops to combinations of insets on appliqués and embroideries, it is able to utilize different fabrics, colors and patterns in innumerable ways.

"But far from being confined to lingerie, the Schiffli machine plays a part in every fashion category. Leather and fabric gloves are embroidered. So are slippers, pocketbooks, hats, neckwear, blouses, handkerchiefs, dresses, suits, children's wear, men's apparel, household linens and drapes.

"The list is long, but the sails of the little 'boat' are set. And its course is boundless.

"The designer originates the embroidery design on paper. The small drawing is stamped on fabrics for sample patterns, and then goes to the enlarging room, where its size is increased sixfold.

"Individual mending samples are made by 'menders' working sewing machines. Samples are approved by buyers before mass production. 'Mending' in connection with this work is misnamed, relic of days when embroidery was used for patching.

"Transference of design from paper to fabric is done by the Pantograph.

"The enlarged pattern is traced by hand, each movement controlling 134 needles working the pattern reduced to a sixth.

"Alternative to hand-controlled Pantograph is automat, worked by card roller bearing patterns. These rolls control ten yard machines with 682 needles, fifteen yard machines with 1,020 needles.

"Making the pattern rolls, working on the same principle as the Pantograph, the operator traces the design on the enlarged pattern. Simultaneously the design is transferred to the card on the roller (left) and to the sample design on the fabric (right).

"Rolls control designs on yards of fabric. Workers rethread needles when necessary. Flaws are marked and later mended by hand. For individual motifs backing fabric is destroyed by processing." Albert Bartholdi (*Jersey Observer*, April 9, 1948).

(cf. note 4, p. 147)



GOLDEN JUBILEE CACHET ---- Designed by Karl Lind

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